

A SERIES
OF
DISCOURSES,
ON
FUNDAMENTAL RELIGIOUS SUBJECTS;
INCLUDING A
PRELIMINARY DISCOURSE
ON THE
DIVINE REVELATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

BY THE REV WILLIAM WINANS, D.D.

Rightly dividing the word of truth.—Sr. PAUL.

EDITED BY THOMAS O. SUMMERS.

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TO
THE MEMBERS
OF THE
Mississippi Annual Conference
OF THE
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

DEAR BRETHREN:—

Your repeated requests to me, to prepare a volume of Sermons FOR PUBLICATION, were necessary to inspire me with sufficient self-confidence to intrude upon the public with such a work. I deem it, therefore, fitting and proper, in an enterprise of so much temerity, in which I am engaged in compliance with your wishes, to throw before myself the ægis of your PATRONAGE. With this view, as well as to give expression to my unfeigned regard for you, I respectfully dedicate the following Discourses to YOU; and am,

Reverend and dear Brethren,

Your affectionate Brother in Christ,

WILLIAM WINANS.

Centreville, Amite, Miss., February, 13, 1854.

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P R E F A C E.

PREFACES to books are rarely profitable to the reader, in any reasonable proportion to what they have cost the author in elaborating them. They are often not read at all, under the plausible pretext, that, if the works they herald be good, they need no master of ceremonies to procure them a reception—if otherwise, no flourish of introduction can command them to favor. Still, *custom* imposes on an author the duty of sending an *avant courier*, to bespeak attention to his chief, and to describe to the public the appearance and prominent qualities of their coming visitant. Independently as I am wont to act, I have not quite sufficient hardihood to throw off the authority of custom in this particular. Besides, there really are some matters, in relation to the Discourses I am about to send out into the world, about which I should like to have a colloquial interview with the reader, before he shall take those Discourses in hand.

I am well aware that religious Discourses are not the sort of literature which commands general attention or excites general interest. I am also aware that there already are, in the libraries of the comparatively few who take an interest in this species of literature, many works of this kind of such great worth as to render successful competition with them utterly hopeless, to one not much more highly favored than I can presume myself to be. Why, then, it will naturally be inquired, have you come forward, before the public, with such a contribution to its literature? I answer: that though religious Discourses are not in *general* demand, there are many who find in them an interest greatly superior to that which *they* find in the most highly appreciated literature. And ought there not to be an appropriate purveyance for moral tastes and appetences, which, though rare in the world, are by no means injurious to the best interests of society? Again, though it would require greatly superior talents and learning, to any to which I can lay claim, to produce religious Discourses that could hold successful competition with those of South, Massillon, Mason, and Chalmers, yet, it is not impossible that my

modes of thinking, and my style of expression, may so fall in with the peculiarities of mental and moral constitution, in many individuals, as to render my inferior instructions more useful, if not more admirable, to them than the instructions of these great masters of pulpit eloquence. Moreover, though there are Discourses extant on all the subjects embraced in *my series*, I am not aware that Discourses, on these subjects, are to be found published together, forming a system of *related* facts and doctrines, and exhibiting the inter-dependence of the several parts, as well as the relation of each part to the whole. This systematic arrangement of the fundamental doctrines and facts of Christianity, I conceived to be a matter of no inconsiderable importance. And this I have here attempted.

But, notwithstanding these reasons for publishing a volume of religious Discourses, I should scarcely have had sufficient temerity to do it, had not the Mississippi Annual Conference, whose voice I have long been in the habit of regarding with much deference, officially and repeatedly expressed a conviction that I might *thus* subserve the interests of religion. A good many years ago, that body, by formal resolution, requested that I would prepare a volume of sermons *for publication*. So long as I had health and vigor to perform the duties of a preacher and pastor, I could never find leisure to comply with this request. But when, by a chronic affection of the throat, I was disqualified for the performance of these duties, and when the request of the Conference was repeated, at its session, in Clinton, La., in 1851, I resolved to attempt such a compliance. At my own instance, a Committee was appointed by the Conference, to examine my Discourses, as they should be prepared, and to decide upon their suitableness or unsuitableness for publication, under Conference patronage. Prompted thus, by a body which I regarded as wise and prudent, and under the inspection and control of a judiciously selected Committee of that body, I felt emboldened to enterprise what I should, without such prompting and guardianship, have regarded as incurring the imputation of rash temerity. Even with this encouragement and support, I sometimes feel no little misgiving as to the prudence of this venturesome step. If I have unwarrantably trespassed on the public, however, in consenting to appear as the author of a volume so grave in its character, that public will have the means of rebuking my presumption in the most effectual manner, with no more expenditure of means, in the infliction, than by

refusing attention to these Discourses. Not to patronize—not to read them, will be a chastisement fully adequate to any presumption implied in their publication.

I could not hope to acquire fame, in a walk of literature so far from being popular, as that of religious Discourses, even though I could have been vain enough to imagine that I was competent to secure a place in the first rank of those who have published in the same line. How much less, when I *knew* that I could not sustain a respectable competition with writers of *that* class! As little could I hope to derive pecuniary profit from such a publication. What motive, then, could have prompted me to the toil and hazard of such an enterprise? I humbly submit that there was still one very efficient motive which might have actuated me in the matter—a desire to advance the interests of the highest order of truth. If I shall have failed in *this*, I feel that my failure will have been absolute. If, on the other hand, I shall, though but to a limited extent, have succeeded in advancing the interests of *this* truth, I shall consider myself amply compensated; though neither fame nor pecuniary advantage shall have been promoted by the operation. For the advancement of those interests ever tends to promote the glory of God and the salvation and eternal happiness of mankind. Could I be assured of success in this particular, I should be abundantly satisfied, let the fate of my Discourses be, in other respects, what it might.

Of the *merits* of my performance, I, most certainly, am not qualified to judge; and, if I were, it would be altogether unbecoming in me to pronounce upon them. My utmost stretch of self-esteem will not allow me to suppose these Discourses to be above mediocrity. The style in which they are written can lay no claim to more than two advantages—*perspicuity* and *force*; and, to what extent its claim to *these* is valid, I can by no means determine. To elegance and ornament, it can advance no pretensions whatever. Individuality, if not originality, will, I think, be readily conceded to it. If it approach the peculiar style of any other speaker or writer, I am totally ignorant of the fact. I have attentively read the writings of many wise and good men, but, in my interpretations of religious doctrines and duties, I have not dared to follow any of them implicitly. Hence, the views which I have presented, of the subjects, treated of in the following Discourses, are strictly my own views—that is, they are views which I have derived from the sacred Scrip-

tures — the only authority to which I have felt it right to submit with unqualified deference. The opinions of wise and good men I have sufficiently respected, to subject to vigorous examination my own which conflicted with them. Farther than this, I could not regard them, without violating the injunction to “call no man on earth master.” It will not, therefore, be thought strange that my opinions have sometimes been in conflict with those of even the Founder of my own sect, and with those of its most illustrious ministers, both in England and in this country. This cannot be charged to the account of arrogance and self-conceit, on any other supposition, than that which none will entertain — infallibility of judgment in those great and good men. *They* differed among themselves; as independent thinkers among imperfect mankind may always be expected to do; and, though vastly their inferior in general intelligence and learning, it may sometimes happen that the truth, which eluded their perspicacity and research, may have been rendered apparent to my understanding, by some peculiarity in the circumstances in which it was presented to my mind.

The only *authority* to which, in matters of religion, a well instructed Christian can implicitly defer, is that of the Holy Scriptures, *as they are understood by himself*. And, where the examination of their import has been careful, diligent, patient, and honest, though there may have been errors in the results obtained, those errors would never be of a kind to be fatal in the influence they should exert upon the course of the inquirer in the way of salvation. Satisfied that the only safe guide to religious truth, from first to last, is the revealed mind and will of God in the sacred Scriptures, I deemed it proper to prepare the way, for the series of Discourses, on fundamental religious subjects, which I was about to publish, by inserting a *preliminary* Discourse, on the Divine Revelation of the Old and New Testament Scriptures. An apology is, perhaps, due, for the attempt to compress, within the limits of a single Discourse, (though of unusual length,) an argument, including so many points, and meeting so many and so various objections. I did think, however, that the *gist* of the argument could be presented within those limits; and I made the attempt, with what success the reader must judge.

The *series* of Discourses on fundamental religious subjects, contains sixteen in number. The two first are on the subject of *Divine existence*, having regard to whatever is proper or peculiar to that

existence, including the *Trinity in Unity*. Nothing new or peculiar, except in the mode of presenting the subject, could be expected on themes so common among religious speakers and writers. So far as I know, the *form* of the argument, in support of the doctrine ascribing Trinity in Unity to the Deity, is altogether new. And it appears to me that this *form* is better calculated to enforce conviction of the truth of that doctrine than any other *form* of argument on the subject that I have ever seen. How successful I have been in bringing the force of this mode of argument to bear upon the point to be supported, must be left to others to judge.

The second subject, treated of in this series, occupies two Discourses. That subject is *Creation*—creation in general, and the creation of man, in particular. In the view I have taken of creation, I have disallowed the *theories*, which owe their chief support, perhaps their existence itself, to the *facts*, developed, or supposed to be developed, by geology. These facts, supposing them all to be *real*, do not appear to me to require a departure from what was, so recently, the almost universal interpretation of the Mosaic account of that first manifestation of Divine Wisdom, Goodness and Power. Some geological facts may be difficult to reconcile with that interpretation; but, is it not entirely probable that the whole difficulty in the case arises from our ignorance of the changes, which, in the lapse of six thousand years, have been produced by the ordinary and extraordinary revolutions which, *we know*, are constantly occurring in one part of the globe or another? Till we are well informed, in regard to these changes, any inferences we may draw, from the best established facts of geology, on the subject of Creation, must be as uncertain as those of ignorance, from very imperfectly understood facts, always are. The creation of Man had peculiar importance, in its connection with the other matters treated of in my series of Discourses; and therefore special attention has been bestowed upon it. It is peculiarly important, not merely in this relation, but from the intrinsic value of man, compared with other subjects of creation.

The agency of the Devil, in breaking up the moral order which God had established in the world, in introducing evil and death into the world and in involving man especially in guilt and ruin, was too important to allow that his history, character and relation to man should be omitted from the *series*. It has become but too

frequent to call in question the personal existence of this fallen, malignant spirit, and to impugn, as a relic of *middle-age* superstition, all recognition of one or the other. But, if there be superstition in the matter, it dates back, far beyond the middle ages, and numbers among its most doting votaries the Saviour and His apostles. In *such* company, I am well content to endure the scorn or the pity of Sadducean Rationalistics; who, scorning dependence on Divine teaching, assume to themselves a competency, not merely for self-direction, but for the correction of prophets, apostles, and even Christ himself. The personal existence and agency of the Devil, it is believed, are as clearly revealed in the Holy Scriptures as any other fact or doctrine whatever; and, so malignant is he towards man, and so mischievous to him is the agency he exerts, that I thought it of no little importance to bring them fairly into view.

The original transgression of the law of God by man, and its baleful consequences, on his legal relation to God, and on the moral and physical condition of man, occupy two of the *serial* Discourses—one on the transgression itself, and its consequences on man's legal relation to God—the other, upon the moral and physical consequences of that transgression on man's condition. This event, so disastrous in its character, so important to be known, in order to the vindication of the infinitely wise and Almighty Creator, in whose works so much evil, both moral and physical, is known to exist, and so intimately related to the great plan of Redemption by Jesus Christ, required an extended notice. This I have rendered to it; endeavoring, as accurately as possible, to conform the views I have advanced on the subject to the teachings of Divine Revelation.

The plan of Redemption and Salvation, by Jesus Christ, form the subject of six Discourses. These, in the order in which they occur, are on the *Incarnation of the Divinity in humanity, in the person of Jesus Christ*—*The Character of Christ in the days of His flesh*—*His Death and Burial*—*His Resurrection from the dead*—*His Ascension into Heaven, and His perpetual Advocacy and Intercession for man*—and the *Holy Ghost, and His offices, affecting the Salvation of man*. To me it appeared that all the matters discussed, in the six Discourses, were essentially component parts in the great scheme of human Redemption and Salvation; and I have, consequently, included them all in the view I have presented of that gracious scheme—assigning to each what appeared to me its proper position,

and the prominence it ought to have in that scheme. I am well aware that some of the opinions I have advanced, particularly in the first of these six Discourses, are inconsistent with those generally entertained by writers, with whom I am in cordial agreement on most subjects of a religious character; but, as I was entirely satisfied of the correctness of those opinions, I felt it my duty to express them freely and confidently. Those who differ from me, will and ought to indulge in the same freedom and confidence, after having, as I certainly have done, carefully examined the Scriptures that have a bearing upon the subjects of those opinions, with an honest and earnest endeavor to make that examination in a spirit of candor, and with freedom from prepossession.

The two next Discourses in the series — on *Repentance toward God*, and on *Salvation by Faith in Christ Jesus* — are designed to exhibit the mode in which the *personal transgressor* may obtain an individual interest in the plan of salvation, and thus secure to himself eternal life. That plan is absolute, effectual and final, so far as regards the guilt of the original transgression — and so far, too, as respects the eternal well-being of all who die, without having personally offended God. But, salvation and eternal life to *personal transgressors*, are contingent and conditional. And, none but such as repent, and, where the instructions of the gospel enable them to do so, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, have any ground to hope for that salvation and eternal life. The view which I have taken of *Repentance* towards God, is by no means the common one; but, as I persuade myself that it is strictly scriptural, I have no hesitation in advancing it.

The last Discourse in the series, is on the *General Judgment*. This great and exciting subject, I have endeavored to discuss, with the calmness of sober investigation, and at the same time, with the solemnity and earnestness which befitted a theme so grave and of such universal concernment. The reader will not see more clearly than I have depressingly felt, the great inadequacy of my powers to the magnitude and grandeur of my subject. But, feeble as I felt my attempt to be, I did not feel at liberty to shrink from making it. Too much is at stake, to allow a sense of insufficiency to impose silence, in regard to a matter in which every child of man is so deeply and eternally interested; and which, when even very imperfectly represented, is so well calculated to exercise a moral

influence upon those to whom the representation is earnestly made ; for, if the conviction can be wrought in the human mind, that the whole of life and character will be judicially investigated, before an assembled universe, that rewards will be distributed to all men, according as their works shall have been, whether good or bad, and that those rewards will constitute the final, the eternal doom of those to whom they are appropriated, there are few who will not, at least for the time being, adopt the poet's reflection, " How careful, then, ought I to live ! " And this awakened reflection may lead the sinner to inquire, " what shall I do, to be saved ? " and may prompt him to " seek the Lord, while He may be found, and to call upon Him, while He is near ; " as it may stir up the Christian to renewed diligence, in " working out his own salvation," and in striving to " make his calling and election sure."

These Discourses are not, in the common acceptation of the term, *sermons*. There is, in them, too much discussion, too much argument, and too little *movement* to admit them to that classification. Some of them are entirely too long for pulpit utterance — rarely, indeed, is a *spoken* discourse better than barely tolerable that exceeds an hour in its delivery. But the case is different with those which are to be *read* ; as the reader, if his powers of attention fail, in the course of its perusal, can lay it down, and resume his attention to it, when his weariness shall have passed off. I have great doubt whether I could *write* discourses sufficiently *declamatory* in their character for public utterance, to a promiscuous audience. Be this as it may, I certainly could not accomplish the purpose contemplated in my series on fundamental religious subjects, in such a style of composition. To many readers, this circumstance will, I apprehend, be anything but agreeable ; and, on the whole, I shall certainly not be surprised to learn that my book is not very extensively a favorite. I must, however, in any event, comfort myself with the assurance, I feel that " I have done what I could " — the *best* I could. With this consoling assurance, I devote my humble effort to God, invoking His blessing upon it ; and resign it to the reader, praying of him, a candid, if not an indulgent consideration of it — and this, as well for his own sake, as out of justice and kindness to the

AUTHOR.

DISCOURSE I.

THE SCRIPTURES, OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, A REVELATION FROM GOD.*

"Thy Word is Truth."—JOHN xvii, 17.

ACCUSTOMED, for many years, to consider the Bible as being the Word of God, and to believe that this persuasion was not only well founded, but very generally entertained, at least among those with whom our ministerial lot has been cast, it required a special invitation, together with the assurance that the thing was needed, to induce us to attempt a formal defense of the claims of Scripture to be the Word of God. It would require much more time than can be employed in a single Discourse, to bring into view all the various matters which belong to this important subject. The argument must be greatly generalized, to bring it within the most extended limits allowable in a *spoken* Discourse. Well for us, if we shall not weaken the force of that argument, by too much generalization.

It will be necessary, in the outset, to assume several important positions, as either axiomatic in their character, or, at least, as not requiring to be proved to this audience; and, we assume that,

1. There is a Supreme Being, whom we call God; who made everything that exists, and who is infinitely perfect in his nature.

* Delivered at Woodville, Miss., 1839, by request of a committee of Skeptics.

2. Man is capable of moral and religious obligations ; and is responsible, to the extent of his capabilities, to the authority of his Creator.

3. Man ought to worship or do homage to his Creator.

4. God has power, if He see proper to do so, to communicate to intelligent creatures a knowledge of Himself, and of His will, so far as it is important for them to be informed in regard to them ; and,

5. Any communication, coming from God to His creatures, through the medium of either angelic or human instrumentality, must be attested by a miracle, or miracles — by the performance of works independent of or above the operation of natural causes.

In the present Discourse, we design to attempt the proof of the following propositions, *viz.*:

I. The Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are a Revelation from God—that they are *the Word of God*; and,

II. That these Scriptures are *the Truth*, *i. e.* that they represent truly the Divine character, and the nature, condition, obligations, duties and capabilities of man.

I. In proving that *the Scriptures, of the Old and New Testaments, are a Revelation from God*, we shall attempt to make it appear,

1. That there was a probability, *a priori*, that God would reveal a knowledge of Himself, and of His will to man ; and,

(1.) It was important that man should know the character and the requirements of the Being, whom he was obliged to worship, and by whose will he was required to regulate his own actions. “Ye worship ye know not what,” conveys as severe a reflection as any that could be cast upon a rational being ; for, to worship an unknown

God involves, in the first place, the hazard that we may be worshiping a being not worthy of our homage; and, in the second place, the danger that we may worship Him who is worthy, improperly—with rites incongruous to His character and offensive to His disposition—in either case, acting an unreasonable part. If we worship God at all, we shall be certain to worship Him inappropriately or offensively, unless we are informed of His character; for, He requires of us, and, in the nature of things, must require a reasonable service; and, no service can be reasonable, the fitness of which to its object is not understood. Of *such* a service, the Supreme Ruler of the universe would and must say, “Who hath required *this* at your hands?”

And, if it is manifestly important for man to be informed of the character of God, in order to worship Him acceptably, it is still more clearly manifest that His will should be known by man, in order to His being obeyed by man. Nothing could be more utterly absurd than to suppose that man is under obligation to obey God, unless His will is made known to man. The absurdity is so manifest, that it could hardly be rendered more striking by argument or illustration. But, to fix attention upon this absurdity let us suppose a parallel case. Suppose, then, that the government of this State should hold every citizen obliged, under the most awful sanctions, to a strict obedience to all the enactments of the Legislature, and, that, nevertheless, none of these enactments were published to the knowledge of these citizens. This would be strictly analogous to the supposition, whose unreasonableness we are urging, *viz.*: that it is the duty of man to obey God, and that man is not to be informed of His will. Indeed,

the ability to know what is duty, is indispensable to the very notion of obligation; and, therefore, either we are not under obligation to obey God, or it is of paramount importance, that we have it in our power to know what He requires at our hands.

(2.) It was probable, *a priori*, that God would reveal His character and His will to man; because, without such a revelation, man cannot obtain an adequate knowledge of either. This point, we know, is a debated one, but, a very partial acquaintance with the history of mankind, must, we think, put it beyond question. The most cultivated and refined nations, as Egypt, Greece and Rome, destitute of a revelation of God and his will, display an ignorance of both, which would be disreputable to a people having the advantage of such a revelation. In fact, a child, of ten years old, under the instruction of that revelation, has more worthy and rational conceptions of the Divine character, more clear and extended views of moral and religious duties, than the wisest philosophers, who diligently inquired into both matters, but without the aid of such a revelation. When we see such men as Socrates and Cicero devoting themselves, most assiduously, to the study of moral and religious philosophy — when we hear one of them declaring that "no man could know what God required, unless he were taught by a teacher sent from heaven;" and, when we behold the other, as the utmost he could do in the case, desperately resolving that "he would not be convinced, that an important religious dogma was an error, even though he were convinced," and recollect that that truth is firmly believed by every child under gospel instruction, how can we any longer doubt the correctness of the position now under consideration?

Surely, if, in enlightened Greece and Rome, such men as Socrates and Cicero could only thus darkly guess at religious truth, man, without a revelation from God, cannot, in less favorable circumstances, and without their talents and research, know either the character or the will of God! And how should man obtain this knowledge? True, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament doth show His handiwork"—evincing His Godhead, His wisdom and His power. But, these attributes may be formidable as well as adorable. If treacherous, false, or cruel, how extremely dreadful would be a being of such wisdom and power, as are displayed in the works of God! And, what assurance have we, from the condition of the world or of any creature in it, that God is faithful, true and good? Surely, we cannot infer these attributes from the characters which we find impressed upon the creatures which His hands have formed, or from the condition in which we find those creatures placed! In the best states of general society that have ever existed, who is prepared to say that there was a predominance of fidelity, truth and goodness, over their antagonist qualities? And, who does not know that disappointment and sorrow are abundant ingredients in the cup of human life? Seen, as they are, without information how they became such, the character and condition of mankind have puzzled the ingenuity of those who would fain have considered the Creator of all wise, and great, and true, and good; and indeed, without the aid of revelation, we must either withhold from the Deity the ascription of these attributes, or consider the character and condition of man as anomalies or incongruities, that cannot be reconciled with them.

Equally at a loss should we find ourselves to ascertain

a source, whence to derive a knowledge of religious and moral duty, were we deprived of Revelation. It is true that there are some moral duties so indispensable to the well-being of society, that it appears the Creator, in his care for the safety and happiness of man, has impressed a conviction of their obligation upon almost every human mind — at least, their obligation can be reasoned out, from the relations of men in society — from their mutual dependence and necessities. But this is far from being the case with every moral duty, which meets the full consent of every mind to which it is made apparent. Some such duties there are which were never guessed at, till they were revealed in the Holy Scriptures. Of this kind of duties, we shall mention but one — *meekness*, or forbearance towards offenders, and the forgiveness of injuries; or, in one word, abstinence from *revenge*. No moral duty is more important to the well-being of society than this — none more forcibly compels the approbation of every sober thinker to whom it has been made known; and, yet, no philosophy of man, no moral research ever led to the discovery that this belonged to the code of morals, obligatory on man! On the contrary, codes of morals, as well as codes of honor, have existed, which made revenge a duty — a social duty! What is now called “the code of honor,” so considers it — not, indeed, a moral duty — this, in Christendom, would hardly be possible; but a duty of higher obligation than merely moral duty — but a duty, transcending in its claims the laws of one’s country, moral obligation, and the laws of God! And, if this is so in the circumstances of moral enlightenment which surround us, what might justly be expected in the case of those to whom the peculiar moral teaching of the Gospel

has never come? Revenge, immitigable revenge, is nourished on principle by such, and handed down, from father to son, as a sacred, indispensable duty. The Word of God, alone, of all the moral teachers the world has ever seen, inculcates that meekness, which is the only guarantee of the perpetuity of peace in society, or of its return, when the violence of human passion has banished it thence. It required Divine teaching, then, to bring to light *this* moral duty at least; and it was equally necessary that there should be Divine instruction respecting the sanctions of moral duties. Neither the skill of man, nor his research, could ever discover motives, for the enforcement of moral duties, that could be relied on as effective, against strong inducements to the contrary. Neither fear of punishment, nor the excellence and beauty of moral rectitude, affords any certain protection against the assaults of well-adjusted and powerful temptations. Only a strong assurance of the Divine displeasure, against a breach of moral obligation, and of the Divine complaisance towards moral rectitude, can assure the performance of moral duty in all circumstances; and this assurance comes only through a revelation from God—it cannot be reasoned out from any premises presented by philosophy. The knowledge of effective sanctions is as important as the knowledge of the rules of life they enforce; and, therefore, as effective sanctions of moral requirements cannot be invented or discovered by man, it was highly probable, if on no other account, that God would make a revelation to man.

And, if man, in the utmost exercise of his own faculties, and by the most diligent research, is unable to discover the moral duties to which he is obliged, or the sanctions

necessary to their enforcement, how much less may he hope to attain, by unassisted efforts, to the knowledge of the religious duties which are incumbent on him? The *former* are appropriate to relations that lie broad before him; and might, therefore, by a reason unperverted and clear-sighted, be ascertained: whereas, the *latter* regards relations which can be very imperfectly known, only by means of Revelation. The religious history of the world is, accordingly, a melancholy exhibition of pitiable weakness in the human understanding, and of an almost universal tendency to the grossest and most degrading errors, in regard to the service due from man to God. Two classes of errors, on this subject, have divided the world, untaught by revelation, between them—one assigning to man the duty of *religious thought*, as the whole of the service he owes to God—the other making religious duty to consist exclusively in *forms* and *ceremonies*. Both are errors; inasmuch as neither of them occupies the entire capabilities of man for religious service: whereas, the relation of CREATURE manifestly devotes all the faculties to the service of the Creator.

But, besides these *general* errors, how utterly unworthy of an infinitely perfect Being have been the details of every system of religious duty, not derived from Revelation, that has ever been adopted in the world! So puerile, so cruel, so obscene were the rites and ceremonies adopted in those systems, that God was far more honored in their neglect than in their observance. And, was it not probable that an infinitely benevolent Being, who rightly claimed the services of man, should pity him, in the hopelessness of his errors, and teach him, by a revelation directly from Himself, in what manner He required His rational and

moral creatures to serve and to honor Him? Had there been no other inducement to such a Revelation, this, we think, would have been sufficient to prevail with Him, "who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all His works."

BUT, has He made such a Revelation to man? We shall now attempt to make it appear that He *has*. In doing this, we observe,—

2. That we have a volume, or, more properly speaking, a collection of volumes, which claims to be such a revelation. In part, these are the most ancient of all writings extant; and, with the exception of what is called the Book of Genesis, which may be considered as an introductory treatise, professing to have been written contemporaneously with the events recorded and with the revelations reported in them. This collection is just so far historical as serves to connect together, and show the various occasions on which the revelations reported were made, and the influence they exerted upon the character and condition of the world. The various portions of this collection are to be found in almost every written language of man—written and printed in every age, and preserved with unexampled care, by various sects, often bitter in their hostility towards each other; and, notwithstanding many *various readings* of the text, both in manuscripts and printed versions, no important doctrine has been lost or perverted—no serious discrepancy of representation, in regard to any such doctrine, has found its way into any of these versions and manuscripts. The same character of God—the same history of creation—the same account of the Origin, Fall, Redemption and Destiny of man—the same religious and moral requirements are

found, in their integrity, in every copy, of both manuscripts and versions. More copies of the original and of versions from it have probably been made of the Bible, than of all other books put together; and, yet, the integrity of no other ancient writing has, by any means, been so well maintained as that of this collection of Sacred Writings. We are, then, authorized to consider the Scriptures *we have* to be genuine, *i. e.*, to be the writings which, from Moses to St. John, claimed to be repositories of a Divine Revelation. Let it be remarked, that the Bible was not all written by one man, or at one time. Moses is the reputed author of the *first* five books. It is as certain as any thing so ancient could be, that they have been in existence from the time in which he lived; and, it is equally certain, that their authorship was imputed to him coeval with their existence. It is also certain, that the other books or tracts, of which the Scriptures are composed, did not exist contemporaneously with the writing of these; because these are referred to as having previously existed, and as having contributed to the bringing about of the states of things, and to the preparing of the way for those Revelations, which are the subject-matter of those other books. And all this is done with so much *naivete* that it is impossible not to consider the reference to the previously existing writings, as suggested by the fact of their existence, and the influence they have exerted, and not as the planned and invented reference of an artful writer of romance, much less the studied adjustment of an impostor. Allowing, then, that the Bible is a collection of a series of writings, accumulated through a lapse of more than fifteen hundred years, how greatly would the difficulty of preserving consistency, in

an imposture, have been increased by every new fact written, and by every year added in completing the series! It is next to impossible for a single impostor to maintain such consistency, in a work of any serious magnitude; and every additional writer, engaged in the imposture, as well as every change in manners and customs, increases the difficulty. Truth would be consistent in any number of hands, and through any changes of circumstances; but, this could hardly be the case with error; and, if it should be so, the art, the effort, the caution, which would secure such consistency, would be visible at almost every step. *Such* consistency would be attended by a punctilious agreement, in the use always of the same words—in an exact observance of the same aspects, attitudes, and positions, and in a servile recollection of the same circumstances: whereas, truth, preserving consistency in the main tenor of the narrative, or representation, would evince its ease and artlessness by discrepancies in merely circumstantial and unimportant particulars. And, this is precisely what we find to be the fact in the Sacred Writings. They uniformly tell their story with an ease and a regardlessness of criticism, which evince a consciousness of truth and sincerity, which no impostor ever *successfully* affects.

The difficulty of maintaining consistency, arising from the number of writers, the protracted term in which the Scriptures were written, and the change of manners and customs and opinions, which must have had influence upon their successive writers, must have been incalculably augmented, on the supposition that they are an imposture, by what we may call a change in the mode of the Divine administration, which is recorded in the Scriptures. The

spirit of the Divine government is, it is true, the same throughout the whole course of Revelation; but, the *mode* is remarkably changed; and, we venture to assert, that it could never have entered into the purpose of an impostor to represent such a change, in the mode of the Divine administration, as that which was effected when the Levitical priesthood, sacrifices, and ordinances were superseded by Jesus Christ, in offering himself once for all, and by the few, simple, and spiritual institutions of the Gospel. An impostor would have shrunk from such a change, as impugning the consistency of the Divine character, and the stability of the Divine purposes. Or, if we could suppose such an adventure on the part of an impostor, we cannot suppose that he could preserve consistency in his representations, when he should attempt its accomplishment. Either he would denounce the old order of things, as inherently vicious, or he would contend that there was really no difference between the modes of administration in the two dispensations of the Divine government. Only by truth and fact could any one, writing of a change, a striking change of government, preserve consistency—avoid impugning the past or compromising the present. Guided by truth, no difficulty is felt. The former mode has accomplished its object—has prepared the way for its successor; and, writing from fact, he who describes such a change has no difficulty in bringing in the new dispensation, without dishonoring that which is old and vanished away.

The Scriptures, we have said, profess to be repositories of Divine Revelations—not of isolated, inoperative, inconsequential revelations; but of Revelations establishing a system of religion and a code of morals, for the human

family. It was, therefore, to be expected that their influence would not only be felt, but seen also, in those to whom they were imparted—that they would form such a peculiarity of character, as would distinguish them from, and elevate them, in regard to religion and morality, above others. Accordingly, we have the evidence of history and of existing facts, that the Jewish people were formed to a decidedly peculiar character, by the influence of the Revelations in the Old Testament Scriptures, and that their religious opinions and observances were greatly more rational, and their moral code incomparably purer than that of other nations of the earth; and that those to whom the Gospel has been published, have been similarly discriminated and elevated, by the Revelations of the New Testament Scriptures. It is not our present purpose to insist on the superior reasonableness and dignity of the system of religion and morals, revealed in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. It is enough now merely to notice the fact that these Revelations did operate to form communities of peculiar and discriminated characters. This will prevent the possibility of supposing the Bible a mere romance, or an imposture, palmed upon the world to account for existing facts; and this will be more apparent, when it is considered that, at almost any given point of time, the communities, discriminated from all other communities, by the influence of these Revelations, have exhibited a character of dereliction, from their principles, which must have prevented an impostor from *thus* accounting for existing phenomena in the character of the community he had in view. He would have conformed the character of his pseudo revelations to the actual character of his community, so as to establish

a congruity between them, and would not have presented a rule of life, and established a standard of judgment, which were perpetual monuments of the aberrations and backslidings of the community to which he was drawing public attention. As little would an impostor, of talent sufficient to be the author of the Scriptures, propose a rule of life, and a standard of judgment, which his knowledge of human nature would assure him would seldom, if ever, be exemplified in the life and justified in the character of the community it was his purpose to form upon the principles of his imposture. Mohammed, it is well known, accommodated his system of religion and morals to what he knew of the manners and passions of mankind: so as to have a reasonable prospect that those whom he designed to form into a community, on the principles of the Koran, would readily adopt the course and take the character he intended for them. The same policy of accommodation has distinguished the impostures of the Roman Catholic Church, in every nation and among all the various descriptions of people upon whom they have labored to fasten their impositions. This was most strikingly the case, in what may be called the original apostasy of that Church. There is, in the whole of this apostasy, a manifest and labored attempt to incorporate as many of the institutions and ceremonies of the Jewish and Pagan Temples into their system as could, by any possibility, be made to harmonize with their pretensions to Christianity. To this it was owing that the simplicity and humility of the Gospel ministry was made to give place to a domineering hierarchy, of many official grades. This introduced the sacrifices, the images, the lustrations, the festivals, which burden, while they

fascinate the deluded votaries of that corrupt system; and, hence, especially, proceeded their purgatory, their masses for the dead, and their indulgences for the living. Indeed, we may always expect an impostor, who is not insane, so far to enlist the prejudices and predilections of the persons whom he would get under his influence, as to make their accession probable, on principles of human calculation ; and, hence, his rules of life will not, upon the whole, be revolting to those to whom they are prescribed, nor his standard of judgment be so strict that it cannot be conveniently met by them. The Scriptures, on the contrary, offended against all the prejudices, outraged the dearest interests and thwarted the strongest inclinations of those to whom they were originally addressed ; and, in all ages, and among all people, they ever have exacted and ever will exact, of those who come under their influence, as an initiatory and perpetual service, self-denial and cross-bearing—the mortification, nay, the crucifixion of their native propensities, and the renunciation of the world. Does this exactation look like the doing of an impostor, who had talent enough to write the sacred volume ? Would not any man, who should devise such a scheme for reducing the world to the obedience of his system, be considered a madman ? On the supposition that the Bible is a Revelation of truth, there is nothing unwise in the exactions here noted. They are made for sufficient reasons and on proper authority ; and they rely for their efficacy on their truth, and on the influence of their Almighty Author.

3. The Revelations, recorded in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, were authenticated by *miracles*, *i. e.*, by the performance of operations, not only without

the ordinary range of human experience, but beyond and against the known laws of nature. We shall first make a few observations, applicable to the miracles of the Bible in general, and then notice, particularly, a few of those which were performed in confirmation of the Revelations reposed in each of the Testaments.

(1.) A majority of the miracles of the Bible, were suggested by the occasions on which they were performed. Those performed by Moses, in the beginning of his ministry, before the children of Israel, and those performed before Pharaoh, were exceptions to this rule; and for the obvious and sufficient reason, that each of these miracles was designed as well to produce a special effect as to establish a general truth. But, we repeat, a majority of the Bible miracles were wrought without pre-advertisement. This would prevent preparation, on the part of the operator of the miracle, to deceive the spectator; and it would allow no opportunity to the imagination of the spectator to form itself to an agreement with the purpose of the operator. Designed, and even unintentional, collusion, between the performers and the witnesses of these miracles, would be impracticable. As, for instance, the children of Israel came to the Red Sea, pursued by the Egyptians, and shut in by a high mountain on either hand; and seeing no way of escape, they cried out unto the Lord. In this emergency, Moses bids them "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." It does not appear that even Moses was *then* informed by what means God would deliver His people; but, he was assured that He would do it, and, this was enough to preserve his tranquillity and to engage his obedience. When, therefore God commanded the Israelites to move forward,

though it was directly towards the Red Sea, and directed him to lift up his rod, the staff of his prophetic office, assuring him that the sea should be divided, Moses staggered not, through unbelief, but, elevating the wonder-working rod, he led the people forward; when, lo! the waters of the sea were divided, and a way was opened for the ransomed of the Lord to pass, dry-shod, through the mighty deep. Nor did the miracle terminate here; for, the Egyptians, in close pursuit of the Israelites, followed them on their miraculous route; in which, as soon as the Israelites had ascended to high ground, they were overwhelmed by the rushing waters, which, released from their supernatural restraint, returned, under the law of their nature, to a uniform level. There was, in relation to this astonishing miracle, no notification, no predisposing expectation, no collusion, between Moses and the millions of Israelites who were witnesses of its performance. Neither party knew that it was to be performed. Moses was assured that, in the way of obedience, they should find deliverance. They obeyed; and their deliverance was accomplished by means of this miracle. What possibility, we ask, was there that this miracle should have been a *trick*, or an *imposition*? Either the history of its performance is false, or it must have been a genuine work of God — a stupendous miracle.

(2.) Almost all the miracles of the Bible were *publicly* performed. By this we do not mean merely that witnesses were present at their performance, but that they were wrought before friends and foes indiscriminately, without any previous care to secure the presence of such as were predisposed to give favorable testimony in regard to them. This was the case with the miraculous bringing down of

fire from heaven by Elijah. There was the king of Israel, who had sworn to slay the prophet, and had sought him, for the purpose of putting him to death, throughout his own kingdom, and those of the sovereigns who were at peace with him. There, too, were the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, and the four hundred prophets of the groves, who were naturally inimical to a prophet of Jehovah. There, also, were the courtiers of the impious Ahab and the detestable Jezabel ; and who does not know the proverbial supineness and destitution of principle that have ever distinguished this odious class of men? There, moreover, were the *apostate* Israelites, who had forsaken the God of their fathers, to serve idols. The prophet believed and felt himself to be alone in this vast assemblage; and, yet, in these circumstances it is that he comes forward to attest, by a miracle, open to the scrutiny of the multitude of prejudiced and unfriendly spectators, the divinity of his mission. What but madness could have occasioned such an attempt, in such circumstances, unless the prophet was conscious that he could succeed in performing a real miracle? The miracles of the blessed Saviour were generally performed in the same public manner ; for, though nothing could be further from ostentation than His ministry, in all its parts, yet, from the observation of His miraculous operations was excluded neither the spiritually proud Pharisee, who imagined the mercy of Heaven restrained to his sect, nor the skeptical Sadducee, who would fain have rejected all that could not be accounted for, from the operation of physical laws. Priests, Scribes and Lawyers, with all their acumen, and with all their malice, had full opportunity to examine, with all the rigor they chose to employ, the miracles performed

by One, whom it was their most eager desire to find in the wrong. And, had there been imposture in the case, who can doubt that these keen-sighted and interested investigators of His wonderful works would have detected and exposed it? But have they done so? True, they ascribed the works, which He performed in their sight, to the agency of Satan; but, who, that considers the nature and tendency of these works, can admit this solution of the question once proposed to Him, "By what authority doest thou these things?" Are His miracles of a kind, supposing them within the competency of Satanic agency, which we might expect to be performed by the malignant author of evil? Or, are the doctrines attested by these miracles, such as might be expected to proceed from the father of lies and of every abomination? This mode of accounting for the beneficent miracles of the benevolent Saviour, proves that His enemies could not account for them on the supposition of trick or imposture; and, it also proves the intense malignity with which they regarded Him and His ministry. He, himself, tells His enemies that His ministry had been most public, and challenges the arraignment of aught in that public ministry that merited censure. How gladly would they have accepted His challenge, had they not known that His ministry could not be successfully impugned!

(3.) The miracles of the Bible were almost universally of a benevolent character, unless when they were wrought with the express purpose of punishing crime. Of this latter description were the Flood, the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, the plagues of Egypt, the burning of Korah and his company, the swallowing up alive, in the bowels of the earth, of Dathan and Abiram, and a

few others of like character. In general, the Bible-miracles were wrought to deliver the oppressed from the iron yoke of bondage—to give food to those who were hungry, or water to those who were athirst—to restore health to the sick, activity to the disabled, sight to the blind, sanity of mind to the lunatic, or life to the dead—asserting, at the same time, that they attested the ministry of God's servants, and the justice and, especially, the benevolence of Him, whose arm was made bare in their performance. Few, very few *mere* signs were given by the Most High, in attestation of His commission to His ministers. We recollect only those of the rod turned into a serpent, and restored to its proper state,—and the hand of Moses, rendered leprous, on being thrust into his bosom, and being restored to health, on that act being repeated by him.

(4.) The miracles of the Bible were exceedingly various in their character—forbidding the supposition that they consisted of either fortunate accidents, or a system of legerdemain, taught by one generation of mountebanks to another. Scarcely any law of nature exists, with which we are familiar, but was overruled, at one time or another, in the performance of the miracles recorded in the Bible. Gravitation, a fundamental law of matter, gave up its dominion, at the bidding of Him, who imposed that law in the constitution of the world of matter. Iron was made to swim, and water stood in perpendicular erectness, like walls of marble. Fire, kindled to its utmost intensity, consumed not the combustible materials which were cast into it to be destroyed. The hungry lion lay harmless at the feet of the prophet, whose fear of and trust in God enabled him to disregard the menaces of an iniquitous

legislation. Five loaves and two small fishes were an ample repast for more than five thousand persons, who had been several hours without food. The rock, in the arid desert, smitten, at the command of God, with a rod, became a fountain of waters, sufficient to supply the wants of three millions of human beings, besides their flocks and herds. Retarded in her movements, at the command of Joshua, the earth employed thirty-six hours, in performing her diurnal revolution, instead of the customary twenty-four. The eyes, which never saw light, were opened, by an application of clay made with spittle, and washed off at the pool of Siloam. The omnipotent "Ephphatha!" entered the ear which sound had never before penetrated, and the deaf, thenceforth, heard without obstruction. Loathsome and inveterate leprosy is healed by the simple declaration and mandate, "I will—be thou clean." The maiden, of twelve years of age, the young man, only son of his widowed mother, and Lazarus, the beloved of Jesus, who had been four days dead, hear, in the torpor of death, the call of Him who is the Prince of Life, and come back, "from that bourne, whence no traveler," not thus licensed, "returns" to the scenes of earth. Thus and even much more various were the miracles, by which the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were authenticated as a Revelation from God.

4. We shall now more particularly consider a few of the miracles, recorded in both the Old and New Testaments; and,

(1.) The miracle of the Israelitish nation being fed with manna for forty years, will ask our attention in the first instance. Entered upon the uncultivated and sterile desert, that lay between Egypt and Palestine, and without

any magazines of provisions for their subsistence, in their wearisome journeyings, the people beheld only a gloomy prospect of famine before them; and, assembling, *en masse*, gave vent to their despair, and their indignation against Moses and Aaron, who had led them into such circumstances of destitution and danger. “Would to God,” they say, in the bitterness of their anguish and apprehensions,—“Would to God that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh-pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” And, these murmurings and regrets were, to all human seeming, well-founded. What, if human resources alone were to be calculated on, but absolute famine could be expected? Whence were Moses and Aaron to obtain bread, to feed such a multitude, for weeks and months, at least, and that, too, in a fruitless wilderness? No wonder, then, that the multitude murmured against Moses and Aaron—no wonder that they regretted even the house of bondage, in which they had fed to the full—no wonder, unless, indeed, they should have recurred to their recent extrication from danger, by the miraculous passage which had been opened, by Jehovah, for them, through the Red Sea; and, on this intercession in their behalf, they had founded a firm faith that He who had shown Himself mighty upon the waters, for their salvation, could and would open sources of supply to them in time of need. But they did not thus recur to the intervention of Jehovah in this matter, nor did they confide their future destiny to His hand; and, hence, their regret, their despair, their murmuring! God heard their murmuring, pitied their affliction, bore with their

unbelief, and manifested Himself for their deliverance from impending ruin by famine. Through his servant, Moses, He announced, to the despairing multitude, that He would "rain bread from heaven" for them. The fulfillment of this promise is recorded in these simple words: "When the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the Lord hath given you to eat." Our translation is manifestly awkward, when it represents the children of Israel as saying of the new-found deposit left by the dew, "It is manna; for they knew not what it was." The word *manna*, the margin tells us, signifies, "What is it?" Hence, the rendering should have been, "The children of Israel said, concerning it, Manna? (*i. e.*, What is it?) for they wist not what it was." This manna continued, for forty years, to be daily supplied; except that, on the day before the Sabbath, every week, a supply for two days was afforded, and that none was to be found on the Sabbath.

There are several circumstances which place the miraculous character of this supply of food beyond all reasonable question: 1. No such residuum of dew was ever before found on the face of the ground, either in the Sinaitic wilderness or elsewhere—at least all history is silent in regard to any thing of the kind. It has been equally unknown since the entrance of the Israelites upon the possession of their promised heritage. 2. It fell, every day, in sufficient quantity only for the supply of the

people for that one day; except that on one day in every week, there fell a supply for two days; and that on another day, in every week, there fell none at all—these exceptions, to the rule of daily supply, being intended to secure the sanctity of the holy Sabbath. 3. An attempt to lay up a part of one day's supply for the necessities of another day, was rendered abortive, by the manna becoming corrupt; and yet, when, by command of Heaven, a pot was filled with it, to be kept as a memorial of the food with which God sustained His people, it suffered no deterioration for years, or even centuries; as neither did that which, weekly, was kept two days, for the food of the Sabbath. 4. As soon as the necessity of this kind of provision ceased, in consequence of the people of Israel coming to a cultivated land, the manna ceased forever. Now, connect all these circumstances with the fact that this kind of supply was promised beforehand, as a miraculons provision, and who can doubt its miraculous character? None, surely, without impugning its history, can call in question the genuineness of this miracle.

But, how can its history be impugned? Could six hundred thousand men, of twenty years old and upwards, and the millions belonging to them, be imposed upon by the assurance that they had been thus fed, if such had not been the fact? The record of the fact was in their hands. Could they have permitted that record to remain in their archives, and to descend to their posterity, had it been false? There, too, was the pot of manna, a standing memorial, for centuries, of the miracle by which the hosts of Israel had been fed, and a monumental confirmation of the truth of the record! The writings of Moses came immediately into the possession of the people who were

said, in them, to be the beneficiaries of this miracle. Could they have received those writings with respect, not to say with reverence, had they contained this record, of what they all must have known to be false, if such a miraculous supply of food had not been ministered to them? Or, allowing that this record was not in the writings of Moses, when could it have been interpolated? The Jewish Scriptures were in their own language,—were much read, publicly as well as privately, and much venerated. When, then, could so material a circumstance have been foisted into those Scriptures? Not, surely, while the events of the exodus were fresh in the recollections and traditions of those times! nor, certainly, after the history and traditions of those times had acquired the sacredness and venerableness of age, and of long-established deference!

And, what a striking miracle is this! About three millions of people, daily, for nearly forty years, receiving an abundant supply of wholesome food, without dependence on any of the ordinary sources of such supply! No seed germinated, no harvest was gathered to supply the multitude with bread! Well might the astonished Israelites exclaim, “Manna!” when seeing, for the first time, the novel material of that food, by which they were, henceforth while in the wilderness, to be sustained and nourished! Well might Moses, in after days, as well as other Jewish saints, often recur to the *bread of heaven*, upon which they were constantly subsisted for forty years, as a standing evidence that God had chosen the people of Israel for his own inheritance; and that Moses, himself, was the appointed minister of the Divine will among them, accredited by this, as by other striking manifestations of the Divine interposition in their behalf, through his instrumentality.

(2.) The second miracle, to which our attention will be called, is recorded in the fifth chapter of 2 *Kings*. The commander-in-chief of the Syrian armies, whose name was Naaman, was afflicted with that loathsome and inveterate disease—*leprosy*. In his family there was a captive girl, of the Israelitish nation, who was acquainted with the reputation of Elisha, the prophet, for performing miracles. Perhaps she had heard of the miracle he performed at Jericho, in sweetening and rendering salutary the bitter and deleterious fountain, which supplied that city with water, by casting into it a little salt. Perhaps she had heard of the poisonous pottage, which he had rendered innoxious by throwing into it some meal. Perhaps she had heard of his restoring the son of his Shunammite benefactress to life, after he had been many hours dead. Be all this as it may, she certainly had knowledge of his being endued with miraculous powers; for, with true feminine kindness and warmth of heart, the youthful *slave* expressed an earnest wish that her master were with the prophet, that was in Samaria; who, she asserted, “would recover him of his leprosy.” This wish, uttered to her mistress, by the Samaritan captive, was reported to the great man, and, finally, reached the ears of the king himself, who, doubtless, had often heard enough of the wondrous works performed by the prophets of Israel to make him regard the words of the little captive as worthy of attention. The estimation in which he held his general, Naaman, disposed him to resort to any means that promised his recovery from the terrible affliction under which he was suffering. He, therefore, resolved to place his officer in the circumstances in which the Israelitish slave had asserted he would be restored to health.

With this view, he sent Naaman to the king of Israel, requesting that monarch to effect his recovery from the leprosy. The king of Israel, knowing that the cure of leprosy was hopeless, save by Divine agency, supposed the object of the Syrian king, in making such a demand, must be the breeding of a quarrel between the two nations, and was about to dismiss the afflicted generalissimo, not only uncured, but as a peace-breaker. But, Elisha, being informed of the whole matter, probably by Divine inspiration, sent to the king of Israel, desiring that Naaman might come to him. "He shall know," says Elisha, "that there is a prophet in Israel." Accordingly, Naaman was directed to Elisha; and, with a splendid equipage, came and stood at the door of the house in which the prophet was residing.

The preconceptions of Naaman were natural enough. He expected the prophet, with imposing ceremonies and manipulations, to invoke the interposition of his God, in the cure to be effected. But, the prophet, that he might not be supposed to have any personal part in the cure—that that cure might appear to be, as it really was, wholly of God, refused to appear, and directed a simple ablution, seven times in the waters of the Jordan. Naaman, as the event proved, had relied much upon some efficiency resident in the prophet, personally considered; and he, therefore, looked upon the means prescribed for his cure as not only inadequate, but affronting in their character, and was about to go away indignant, without following the prophet's directions. But, his servants, reasoning with him on the imprudence of his course, prevailed on him, at length, to yield obedience to the prophet's requirements; and, dipping himself in the

Jordan seven times, he was made perfectly whole of his distressing malady.

In this whole affair, there is not the slightest ground to suppose that there was collusion between the parties—sleight-of-hand, on the part of the prophet, or illusion on the part of the recovered leper. The parties had no interview, and could have had no means of concerting an imposition upon the public, in regard to the cure. Naaman did not imagine himself into a cure by the means prescribed by the prophet; for, he considered those means an indignity to himself, and wholly inadequate to his cure. The disease was real, was of considerable duration, was confirmed, therefore, into a habit—a chronic affection. The cure also was real. What, then, but a miracle, could have effected the cure? Was it effected by some medicinal virtue resident in the waters of the Jordan? Why, then, were not more of the lepers in that country healed by a similar application of them? Why, especially, was not Gehazi, the prophet's servant, who knew, it is presumed, the whole process of Naaman's cure, recovered from his leprosy, by dipping himself seven times in the Jordan? The virtue was not in the waters of the Jordan—those of Abana and Pharpar would, as Naaman supposed, have been equally efficacious. It was God who gave the word of healing to the prophet; and, in obedience to that word, the leper found health in the waters of the Jordan; as the blind man found sight, by washing off the clay with which his eyes had been anointed, in the pool of Siloam. The virtue came by the appointment of God, who afflicts and heals as He pleases.

Nor can we, without violent improbability, suppose the history of this miracle a fabrication. It is found among

the political annals of one nation, and relates to the cure of a high officer and favorite with the monarch of another nation. These nations, moreover, were of different religions, and very often engaged in the most furious hostility against each other. They were in near neighborhood; and, therefore, the remarkable things at the court of one of these nations, would, in all likelihood, be known at the court of the other, especially if such remarkable event could be regarded as, in any manner, affecting the rival claims of those nations to political or religious superiority. The annals, in which this account is found, were probably made public during the existence of these rival nations, and in sufficient proximity to the time at which this miracle was said to have been wrought, to allow of the falsehood being seen and exposed by the Syrians, if their chief military commander had not been recovered from a leprosy by a prophet of Israel, who professed a religion not only different from theirs, but hostile to, and severely denunciatory of it. Is it reasonable, then, that the story would have been invented, and especially, that it would have been gravely put among the memorabilia of the kingdom? Would not the hazard of detection, exposure and infamy have been too great to allow of such an invention? Would not the Syrian nation, and the court especially, have exulted in the opportunity, afforded by such an attempt at imposition, of exposing to scorn and detestation the nation and religion which they feared and hated? And, would they not have thus exposed them? And, expecting such exposure, would any votary of Israel and her religion and prophets, have incurred it, by attempting an imposition like that we are now supposing? The supposition is violently absurd.

(3.) We shall notice but one more of the miracles recorded in the Old Testament Scriptures; and that will be found narrated in the third chapter of the prophecy of *Daniel*. Nebuchadnezzar was one of the greatest conquerors that ever desolated the face of the earth. He had spread his dominions over nearly the whole of Asia, excepting China and Japan. One part of his policy was to transfer the inhabitants of one country to another country; and, by so doing, to break up local attachments, obliterate peculiarities of character and bring about a homogeneity among the various people he had subdued; so as to make of them one great nation, uniform in manners and harmonious in sentiment. Among other discordances which he aimed at reconciling, was that in regard to Religion. With this view, he had caused to be made an image of the God, whose worship he would have to be universally celebrated. No expense or skill was spared, in rendering this image worthy of the distinction intended for it; and the ceremonies, ordained for its instalment, were of answerable magnificence. All the sweetness of melody, all the force of harmony were put in requisition, to produce the most imposing effect. To bring about the desired uniformity, there was added the terrible denunciation, that any one who should be delinquent, on this great occasion, "should be cast, alive, into the burning, fiery furnace." Thus allured, and thus menaced, the peoples, nations, languages and tongues, subject to this mighty emperor, were nearly unanimous, in merging all religious distinctions in the national worship now established. We say, *nearly* unanimous; for, there were some who, with Abdiel-firmness, refused compliance with the impious requirement of Nebuchadnezzar. Shad-

rach, Meshach, and Abednego, three young men, who were in the court of Nebuchadnezzar, and high in his favor and in office in the State, resolved that they would not comply with a requirement which their consciences disallowed. Royal favor, and honorable and lucrative appointments, on the one hand, and the most terrible punishment on the other, availed nothing "to change their constant minds" in this matter. And, though personally remonstrated with and solicited by the king himself, they firmly, though respectfully, refused to fall down and worship the image that he had set up, and before which an obsequious world lay in prostrate adoration. Defeated in his favorite scheme of uniformity, thwarted in the counsels of his wisdom, which Royalty is so apt to consider infallible — braved by his own servants, and disobliged by his favorites, what wonder that this mighty sovereign was filled with *rage and fury!* What wonder that his countenance, heretofore beaming upon them with favor, was changed to an expression of hatred and wrath against Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego! When could Royalty brook such disobedience? When could infallible dictation regard dissent with patience, or favoritism see itself abandoned and opposed, by the objects of its election, without the most violent rage? Nebuchadnezzar was not, at any rate, to be thus thwarted with impunity. His rage burned furiously against his *protesting* servants; and he determined to make them fearful examples of his vengeance. He commanded, therefore, that the furnace, into which they were to be cast, should be heated to seven-fold fierceness; and, causing them to be bound hand and foot, he ordered them to be cast, clad in all their apparel, into the midst of the

devouring fire. Well might the king, who knew no power greater than his own, triumphantly and tauntingly ask these devoted men, "Who shall deliver you out of my hands?"

Great was the faith of these noble young men — great, too, was their meekness and their humility, as well as their devoted piety. "We are not careful to answer thee," they say, in reply to the king, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God, whom we serve, is able to deliver us from the burning, fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But, if not, be it known unto thee, O king, we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." Happy these men! who could commit themselves, with unblenching confidence, into the hands of an Almighty Protector, for life or death — assured of well-being in either event alike. And, their faith was triumphant. The fire, into which they were cast, though of such intense heat as to slay those who approached near enough to the mouth of the furnace to cast them in, was restrained from doing *them* any harm. Upon their *bonds* alone it took effect. Not only were their persons unharmed, but their very clothes remained unsinged. "The smell of fire did not pass upon them." Such is the simple, though triumphant representation of the matter by the sacred writer. The astonished king beheld those whom he had devoted as victims to his idolatrous bigotry, and had cast into the burning fiery furnace, bound hand and foot, walking, unbound, in the midst of the fire, accompanied by a glorious personage, whom he, probably, was correct in supposing to be "the Son of God." Calling these men out of the burning flame, the king adored their God;

who had sent His angel to deliver those, His servants, from their danger, and who alone, of all the gods, could thus deliver those who trusted in Him. And the king, further, made a decree, that severe punishment should be inflicted on any who, in his dominions, should thenceforth speak anything amiss of the God of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego.

Here, then, is a miracle, wrought in midst of a capital of a mighty empire, in derogation of its religion, and in flagrant opposition to the most favorite scheme of its absolute ruler. Could there be fraud or imposture in such a miracle, performed in such circumstances ? Or, can the account of it be a fabrication ? A decree of the Chaldean empire, extending then over all the known nations of Asia, is declared to have been based upon this miracle. Either the decree did, or did not exist—if it did exist, how, but on the supposition that the miracle was actually performed, can its existence be accounted for ? If it did not exist, who, but a madman, would have included, in his account of a factitious miracle, a circumstance which might so easily be disproved as the fact of this decree ? Surely, it requires no little credulity to believe that a writer, of so much common sense, not to say of such superior ability, as he who wrote the book of Daniel, could have placed himself so completely at the mercy of the slightest inquiry ! Who, as a similar case, would venture to publish to the world that the disciples of Luther, in the days of Charles the Fifth, had, by that Emperor, been cast into the fire, before an immense multitude, in the city of Ratisbon, because they would not adore an image of the Virgin Mary ; and, that, upon their escaping from the flames unscorched, Charles had

recognized the hand of God, in their deliverance, and had issued a decree that, throughout his dominions, none should impugn the Protestant faith with impunity? He who should venture on such a publication, would run the risk of being consigned to bedlam. Yet, such is the *madness* of which the very able writer of the book of Daniel must stand charged, if the account he has given, of the deliverance of the three Hebrews from the burning, fiery furnace, be not a true account, and if the decree of Nebuchadnezzar, in regard to it, were not issued.

By the *first* of *these* miracles God made himself known to the Israelitish nation, as the Supreme Disposer of events; and confirmed, beyond all question, the prophetic character of Moses, as well as furnished an ample supply of food to his people, during all their wanderings in the wilderness, for nearly forty years: by the *second*, He asserted, to the idolatrous Syrians, and apostate Israelites, His prerogative over life and death, over health and disease, and authenticated the prophetic character of Elisha; besides that he restored to health a most worthy sufferer; and, by the *third*, He showed, in the face of all people, that He is "King of kings," ruling among men, and bringing to nought, when He pleases, the counsel of princes — that counsel is folly, and might feebleness, when they are employed against Him — that those who trust in Him, are under sure and invincible protection — besides, that He actually did deliver, from a most frightful death, three excellent young men, condemned, for their steady adherence to principle. In all these cases, the occasions, judging on merely human grounds, were worthy Divine interposition; and the moral effect was of sufficient importance to warrant the performance of a miracle, if

there had been no famine to prevent, no leprosy to heal, no pious youths to preserve from a death, as wholly undeserved as it was horrible in its character.

We shall now consider a few of the miracles recorded in the New Testament. There is much difficulty in making a selection, where the miracles performed are so numerous, so benevolent and so striking; but, we shall present the following for consideration.

(1.) The first which we shall notice, is that of *giving sight to a man who was born blind*. It is recorded in the ninth chapter of the Gospel by St. John. As Jesus was passing, from one scene of His ever active beneficence to another, He saw a man, of mature age, who had never seen the sweet light of heaven. His disciples were curious to know why this calamity had befallen him; and believing that all physical evil was the result of moral evil, and, moreover, that men were punished only for their own sins or for those of their parents; and, as it would seem, embracing the doctrine of *transmigration*, they asked their Master, whether this blindness had befallen the unfortunate man on account of his own sins, or those of his parents. Jesus assures them that neither for his own sins, nor for the sins of his parents had this calamity come upon him, but that occasion might be afforded for the manifestation of the works of God; and adds, "As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world." Having so said, He spat on the ground; and, making clay with the spittle, applied it to the eyes of the blind man, and bade him go to the pool of Siloam and wash. The blind man went and did as directed; and, behold! *his eyes were opened*, and he saw. This is the whole account of this very astonishing operation. The

story is told with a simplicity and straight-forwardness that give it an air of truth which must strike every reader.

But, besides the intrinsic evidence that this narrative is true, found in the simplicity and straight-forwardness, with which the story is told, there are circumstances attending the performance of the miracle, which render it next to impossible for us to doubt its authenticity. The miracle was performed on the Jewish Sabbath; and, the Scribes and Pharisees, predisposed to question aught that was calculated to establish the pretensions of the Blessed Saviour to the Messiahship, laid hold of this circumstance to impugn the miracles of Jesus in general, and this of the enlightened blind man in particular. They reasoned that, as Jesus did not keep the Sabbath day holy, as they contended he did not when performing cures, he could not be of God; and, if not of God, he could not perform a real miracle. Hence, they instituted a most rigorous investigation of this *reputed* miracle—not with a view to ascertain the truth in regard to it, but, if possible, to prove it to have been falsely reported. Their first step, after hearing the simple statement of the man who professed to have received his sight, was to establish the identity of the blind man; so as to ascertain whether he, who professed to have received his sight, were really the same, or whether he were an impostor. For this purpose, calling before them the parents of the man who had been born blind, they demanded of them whether that person was their son, who, *they said*, was born blind? The parents unhesitatingly declared that he was their son, and that it was matter of knowledge with them that *he was* born blind. The next interrogatory of the Scribes and Phari-

sees was, by what means their son was brought to see? On this point, the parents professed ignorance; and it may be, they did not *know*, though they had *heard* and *believed* that Jesus had opened their son's eyes. Their gratitude for this unspeakable mercy to their son, was overborne by their fear of excommunication; for, the rulers of the Synagogue had agreed that, if any man should confess Jesus to be the Christ, he should be excluded the Synagogue. Hence, they disclaimed any knowledge of the person by whom their son was made to see. Perhaps the parents trusted that the greatness of his obligation to Jesus would secure impunity to their son, in a confession which *they* could not make with safety. Be this as it may, they referred their interrogators to their son, for an answer which they dared not give in sincerity themselves. He was, then, again called before the inquisitors, who, instead of inquiring of him by what means he, who had been born blind, was now able to see, exhorted him to give the praise of the benefit conferred upon him to God; adding, "We know that this man," Jesus, "is a sinner." The poor man, though puzzled with their casuistry, could not be induced to deny his Benefactor; and he answered with a sarcasm, not the less cutting for the tone of humility in which it was uttered, "Whether he be a sinner *or no*, I know not — one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind now I see." His examiners, wishing, perhaps, to confound him by the reiteration of their questions, again asked him, "What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes?" His answer was such as should have confounded and covered them with shame, knowing, as they did, that they were predetermined against conviction of the genuineness of the

miracle. "I have told you already," says he, "and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? Will ye also be his disciples?" Enraged that he, who had but just opened his eyes upon the world, should have been able to penetrate the dark malignity and prejudice of their hearts, the Scribes and Pharisees descended to the ignoble office of reviling him whom they could not induce to renounce his Benefactor. "Thou," they say, "art his disciple; but, we are Moses's disciples. We know that God spake to Moses: as for this fellow we know not whence he is." "Why," replied the man, "herein is a marvelous thing, that ye know not whence he is, and yet he hath opened mine eyes. Now, we know that God heareth not sinners; but, if any man be a worshiper of God and do his will, him he heareth. Since the world began was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind. If this man were not of God he could do nothing." This was reasoning so forcible, so conclusive, on their own principles, too, that they did not even attempt any other refutation, but that which is always the last resort of baffled authority. They cast him out, *i. e.*, excommunicated him, after contemptuously exclaiming, "Thou wast altogether born in sins, and dost *thou* teach *us*?" To see the full force of the reasoning employed by the recovered man, it is necessary to recollect that the Pharisees had said, "We know that God spake unto Moses." How did they know this unless by means of the Divine interpositions, whereby the intercourse of Moses with God was attested to others? And, were any of these interpositions more strongly marked, more manifestly of God, than that which was the subject of the present investigation? They rightly concluded that

Moses was of God, and that God spake to him, because Moses was enabled to perform works which could be performed only by the employment of Divine energy ; but none of the works performed by Moses more clearly inferred the presence of Divine energy, than did the opening of ~~the~~ eyes of one who was born blind. If, therefore, the works performed by Moses, authenticated *his* mission as from God, it was passing strange that this manifestation of the Divine power, in the works of Jesus, should have left the Pharisees ignorant whence He was. No wonder that, resolved as they were to reject the mission of Jesus, the Pharisees should break off the investigation, in regard to this miracle, when, in the simple reasoning of this unlettered man, they were so completely overmastered and confounded.

Let us further remark, that this miracle was wrought in the immediate neighborhood in which the blind man had lived, and in which he had been a public beggar. He was, therefore, well known : so that there could be no mistake in regard either to his identity or his habitual blindness. Of the reality of his vision, no question was made, either by his neighbors, or by the Pharisees, who so rigorously and with such manifest solicitude to disallow the miracle, examined the case. Everything in regard to this miracle, was matter of public notoriety — nothing, concerning it, was done in a corner. How, then, if the miracle were not genuine, are we to account for the absence of any attempt to discredit it, save the puerile argument employed by the Pharisees, that it could not be a work of God, because it was performed on the Sabbath-day ? Will it be said that other objections were probably made, but, that, as no writings of that time, of

those unfriendly to the claims of the miracle, now exist, those objections are not extant? But, can we suppose that, if such objections had existed, there would be no reference to them in this detailed account of the investigation gone into on the occasion? Is it at all reasonable, nay, is it not utterly absurd to suppose that all trace of such objections, had they existed, would have disappeared? The fact that one objection, relied upon, and often urged by the enemies of Jesus, is preserved, affords a strong presumption that, had there been other objections, they, too, would have been noted, and would have been found, in some form, in the history of that important case.

(2.) The second New Testament miracle, which will ask our consideration, you will find recorded in the eleventh chapter of the Gospel by *St. John*. There was, at Bethany, a family, consisting of Lazarus and his two sisters, Martha and Mary, with whom our blessed Saviour was in habits of friendly intercourse. Of the character of Lazarus we know nothing; but some intimations are afforded us of that of his two sisters. Martha was hospitable, frank, and of an active, managing character. Mary was retiring, modest and remarkable for docility of disposition. The Evangelist has informed us that Jesus *loved* this amiable family; and, we may be assured that He, who knew the whole strain of character belonging to each of them, and was Himself, the consummation of all excellence, loved them only because their characters were such as rendered them worthy of His affection. There came a message to Him, from Martha and Mary, when at a considerable distance, informing Him that Lazarus was sick. When He received this message, He remarked to His disciples, that the sickness of His friend was "not

unto death ; but, for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." He could not have meant that the sickness of Lazarus should not produce his death — the whole scope of the narrative forbids the supposition that such was His meaning; unless, indeed, it was His insane purpose to contradict Himself without a motive. His meaning must have been, and evidently was, that death should not be the *final result* of the sickness of Lazarus. He did not think proper, however, as He often did, either to send a health-giving message to the sufferer, or to go Himself and raise his friend from the bed of sickness, but remained where He was two days, after receiving the intelligence of His friend's illness. What a trial of their friendship for Jesus, must the sisters have endured from this, to them, inexplicable delay ! They both, afterwards, avowed their conviction that Jesus could and, if He had been present, would have saved their brother's life. They sent to Him with *that view* ; but, He came not; and their brother died ! After two days delay, Jesus said to His disciples, "Our friend, Lazarus, sleepeth ; but I go, that I may awake him." The disciples thought He spoke literally ; but Jesus told them plainly, " Lazarus is dead ;" and added, " I am glad, for your sakes, that I was not there, to the intent that ye might believe." He went, accompanied by His disciples ; and, when He arrived, He found that Lazarus had been four days dead. After much interesting conversation with the sisters, and the manifestation of the tenderest sympathy in their sorrows, He came to the place of Lazarus's sepulture. It was a cave, the mouth of which was shut by a stone being placed upon it ; and He commanded that the sepulchre should be opened, by

removing the stone. Martha, shocked at this order, remonstrated that, as her brother had been now four days dead, he must be offensive. But, Jesus reminded her that He had told her that, "if she would believe, she should see the glory of God." The stone was removed; and, Jesus, lifting up His eyes to heaven, said, "Father! I thank Thee that Thou hast heard me. And I knew that Thou hearest me always; but, because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that Thou hast sent me." Here He intimates His purpose to work a miracle, by the power of His Father, with the express intention to accredit, with the people, His Divine mission. Having made this important preparation, for the miracle He was about to perform, He cried, with a loud voice, that all present might distinctly hear, "Lazarus, come forth! and, immediately, he that had been four days dead, came forth," in the presence of all, friends and foes alike; for there were foes of Jesus present on this occasion; and many of them were convinced, by this miracle, that He was the Messiah. Others, however, went to the Chief Priests and Pharisees, and related to them the whole transaction, it would seem with a malicious intention. Whereupon, a Council was assembled, in which, conceding the fact that Jesus did perform many miracles, they consulted what they should do; arguing that, 'If they permitted Him thus to proceed, the people would all believe on Him, and that the Romans would come and take away their place and nation.' Fools, that they were! not to perceive that He, who could thus perform miracles, even to the raising of the dead, could defend them against the Romans, or any other foe that could come against them. But, their hearts were hardened; and, instead of

throwing themselves under His protection, by receiving Him as their Messiah, they resolved, at the instance of the High Priest, to put Him to death, and, thereby, brought upon themselves the very calamity, to avert which they adopted this horrible resolution. Thus are the counsels of iniquity always foolishness!

A man of sufficient note to induce many of the citizens of Jerusalem to go, after his death, to condole with his bereaved family is sick—dies—is buried, and remains four days under the power of death. The family are given up to mourning, and the neighbors and friends are assembled to sympathize with and comfort them. Many, even from Jerusalem, have come to Bethany with this benevolent purpose. Hope, save of his resurrection, when all the just shall rise, sheds not one ray upon the gloom of their minds, who weep over the grave of the departed Lazarus. To this scene of death and mourning, comes, at length, the Prince of life and peace. First one, and then the other sister of the *departed* meets the Saviour, and with regretful, if not with reproachful greeting, assure Him of their faith that, if, as by their message they meant that He should, *He* had been present, their brother would not have died. He prepares them, by intimations only, however, for His purpose to supply this lack of service towards them; and, when they are thus prepared, in the presence of many persons, He calls back the dead to life. What opportunity was there for imposition in this matter? In the absence of Jesus, in a distant part of the country, Lazarus falls sick and dies. His sickness and death were matters of public notoriety. The grief of the family, and the sympathy of those who came to comfort them, are evidences of the certainty of

His death. Jesus goes near the tomb, in a large company—He does not enter the tomb—He does not even look into it—but, ordering it to be opened, and announcing His purpose to work a miracle, in order that the people might believe that the Father had sent Him, He calls, with a loud voice, “Lazarus, come forth!” Every circumstance, in the whole affair, forbids the supposition of collusion or imposture. No wonder that many, who witnessed this miracle, believed on Him. The wonder is, that any man could be present, without believing on Him. No wonder that the Chief Priests and Pharisees were compelled to admit that He did work miracles!—at least, that this was a miracle of indisputable character. The wonder is, that, after making the concession, they should reject Him as the Messiah, and resolve upon His death.

(3.) The third, and last of the miracles recorded in the New Testament, to which we shall invite your consideration, is the resurrection of Jesus Christ himself from the dead. The blessed Jesus had, on several occasions, forewarned His disciples, and notified others, that He should die a violent death, through the malice of His countrymen: but, He comforted His disciples with the assurances that this could take place only with His own permission, and, that, after He was put to death, He should, on the third day, rise from the dead. “No man,” saith He, “taketh away my life: I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” And, He further assures them that, in both laying down His life, and, in taking it up again, He will act in conformity to the Divine will. “This commandment,” to lay down His life, and to take it up again, “have I received of my Father.” He had not only comforted His disciples, with the assurance, that

He should rise from the dead on the third day, from that on which He should be put to death, but had publicly predicted the same event, with sufficient clearness to be distinctly understood by those most inimical to Him. "We remember," say His murderers to Pilate, "that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, after three days I will rise again." When, therefore, He had been crucified, and was, on careful examination, found to be dead, and was committed to the tomb — a new one, hewn in the living rock, and shut in, by a great stone being rolled to the door of the tomb — His enemies having knowledge of the prediction, of His resurrection on the third day, and having received authority from the Governor, sealed the stone, and placed a guard around it; lest, as they said, "His disciples should come, by night, and steal away His body, and report that His predicted resurrection had taken place :" thus confirming the error which He had promulgated, of His being the long-promised Messiah. Overwhelmed with grief, by the death of their beloved Master, which, though He Himself had often warned them it would come, they had not expected, and alarmed for their own fate, the disciples forgot the promise of His resurrection, and abandoned themselves to grief and despair. Those most devoted to Him, employed themselves in making preparations to come, on the third day, and give Him a more decent burial than, on the eve of the Sabbath, when He was taken from the cross, they were able to bestow upon Him. During this interval, the darkness of death settled down on the tomb of the Saviour, and on the prospect of the world's redemption. His enemies triumphed, and those who loved Him, abandoned themselves to unmixed grief and despondency.

At length, the morning of the *third* day from the crucifixion dawned upon the silent resting place of the Saviour. A brighter light, than that of the dawn, centred upon the hallowed tomb. It revealed the form of an angel of light, severe in the beauty of holiness, to guards who watched around the sepulchre of Jesus. Hardened, by their familiarity with scenes of danger, as their profession must have rendered them, these soldiers of Rome quailed, trembled, fell to the ground and became as dead men in the presence of the angel. An earthquake had accompanied his coming, and, doubtless, had contributed to increase the appalling effect of his presence upon their iron nerves. They could have speared away the disciples had they come to take away the body of their Master, but, how should they contend with a celestial being, coming in an earthquake, and darting the fierceness of lightning, in the glance with which he regarded them? They saw him roll away the sealed stone which they were placed there to preserve inviolate! — they saw him seat himself, in serene, though terrible majesty, upon that stone! — but, it was not in them to oppose or to question him. Meantime, asserting His own undivided and independent power over life and death, the Son of God came forth from the tomb, resuscitated by His own energy, living in His own right. The magnificence and moral interest of this stupendous event urge themselves upon our regard, with almost resistless attraction; but, we must not indulge now in reflections on a theme so heart-thrilling. Our business is one of a much soberer description. It is for us to consider this stupendous event in the simple light of a miracle, wrought in attestation of the pretensions of the Gospel to be a Revelation from God, and of Jesus Christ to be the Messiah.

The authenticity of this miracle stands on high, we might safely assert, on unassailable ground. The crucifixion and death of Jesus were so public, so notorious, that no doubt could exist with respect to their reality. Friends and foes, amidst the crowds assembled to celebrate the Jewish passover, were witnesses of *these*. Disciples and Priests, Pharisees and Sadducees, Roman soldiers and Roman officers beheld His crucifixion and witnessed His death. His burial was with the consent of Pilate, with the knowledge of His enemies, and under the immediate superintendence of a member of the Sanhedrim. The tomb, in which He was buried, was excavated in the living rock, and was closed, at the only entrance, by a great stone being rolled against it. This stone was sealed with the signet of authority; and, to "make assurance," of its inviolability, "doubly sure," till after the period at which Jesus had predicted that He would rise from the dead, a guard was placed around the sepulchre. On the morning of the third day the body of Jesus was missing. The disciples soon publicly reported that His prediction was fulfilled—that He was risen from the dead. The Chief Priests and Pharisees, with His other enemies, must account for the absence of His body. It was under their seal, and in custody of their guards. If He be not risen from the dead, as His disciples say He is, where is His body? They felt that, if they would not serve the interests of Christ's cause, they must answer this question; and they did attempt to do it. They reported that the guards had said, "The disciples came by night, while we slept, and stole Him away." To say nothing of the absurdity of the guards testifying to what was done while they themselves were asleep, can anything be more absurd than the sup-

position that the disciples, who, while their Master was living and regarded by them as the Redeemer of Israel, and the Messiah, were so much affrighted as to forsake Him, would, to get possession of His dead body, encounter the risk of a conflict with the Roman guard? Could they hope to find that guard asleep? Or, if that were probable, could they hope to remove a stone, too large to be rolled away by two or more women, with so little noise as not to awaken men accustomed to the utmost alertness in their profession? Or, supposing that the guard should sleep, and sleep so soundly as to permit the disciples to remove the body of Jesus, without being awakened — supposing that the timid and frightened disciples had mustered sufficient courage to steal away the body of that Master, whom their fears had made them abandon while living, would those guards — Roman guards, — have escaped punishment? Would the Chief Priests and their associates, who had procured them to be stationed at the sepulchre, to prevent the disciples from taking away the body, have winked at their impunity? It is utterly absurd to suppose that they would. What! men so deeply interested to prevent the opinion that Jesus was risen from the dead, be silent, when, by the negligence of the guard, all their precautions to prevent the disappearance of His body were defeated! The thing is morally impossible.

There remains to be considered a class of miracles of a particular kind — we mean *prophecy*, or the prediction of contingent events. To make out a clear case of prophecy, the event predicted must not be foreshown or even rendered probable by circumstances, existing at the time of

the uttering of the prediction. It must be predicted in terms so unequivocal as to be fairly applicable to that event, and to that event alone, which is the subject of the prophecy. It must have such a fulfillment that the prediction may serve, after the thing predicted has come to pass, as a history of the event, changing the time of the verbs only. It is not requisite to a clear case of prophecy, that the character and circumstances of the *coming* event should be capable of being distinctly understood—were this always so, it might be pleaded that the prediction had, at least in the case of events under human control, led on to the fulfillment; but, it is necessary to such a case, that, when the case predicted has come to pass, the terms, in which it was predicted, should be capable of being understood, as predicting the event; and that the character and circumstances of the event should be so developed as to answer clearly to the terms of the prediction. Many *such* cases of prophecy are to be found, in both the Old and the New Testaments. A very few only of these, our time will permit us to notice; and, even at these few, we shall be able merely to glance.

1. The first prophecy we shall bring into view, you will find recorded in the fifteenth and seventeenth chapters of *Genesis*, which is expressed in the following words: “And He said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and that they shall serve them; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; and also that nation, whom they shall serve, will I judge. And, afterward, shall they come out with great substance. In the fourth generation, they shall come hither again. Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great

river, the river Euphrates." Chap. xv, 13-18. "I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession." Chap. xvii, 8. This predictive promise was made to Abram, before that son was born from whom were to descend the nation in which it was to receive its fulfillment. At the time when it was made, the land of Canaan was occupied by powerful nations. What existing probability was there, then, that, in about five hundred years, the descendants of a child, yet to be born, should be in bondage four hundred years; and, then, should dispossess those nations of Canaan, and possess their country? On what grounds, of political calculation, could such a prediction have been hazarded? Yet, this prediction was fulfilled, as fully appears in the after history of the descendants of Abram through Isaac.

But one difficulty exists, in regard to this prediction — It assures Abram that his seed should have the land of Canaan for an "everlasting possession :" whereas, it is certain that the descendants of Abram have not, for the last seventeen centuries, had that land in possession. But, let it be remarked, 1, That what was given to these descendants of Abram, as an *everlasting possession*, is not, by this predictive promise, assured to them against their own act. Against all encroachments from without, they are assured, so long as they are faithful to the covenant by which they hold. But, in many portions of the Sacred Scriptures, their competency to alienate this possession is distinctly recognized. But, 2, Though as was often predicted to this people, they have, by their sins, incurred a long banishment from the land, which was given to them as an everlasting possession, they still claim it *as theirs*,

and confidently expect to return to it, whenever they shall have expiated those national offences, on account of which they were exiled from their country. Nor is this expectation unwarranted. The fact, a very remarkable one—that the Jews, the descendants of Abram, continue a distinct people in all their dispersions, and notwithstanding the mighty motives which, almost everywhere, urge them to renounce their peculiarities, strongly intimates a purpose, on the part of Divine Providence, to employ them, in their national capacity, for some important end. Besides, there are many and not indistinct assurances, that, whenever they shall return to the way of righteousness, they shall be restored to their own land. Their great sin was the rejection of the Messiah—the Prophet, which Moses assured the Israelites, “God would raise up unto them, of their brethren, like unto him;” and, for refusing to hear whom, the most dreadful punishments were threatened by Him. Till they shall return to the Lord, by receiving the Messiah, whom they have so long rejected, their right in the land of Canaan, though unrescinded, will continue in abeyance. Either of the explanations here given, is sufficient, we conceive, to remove the objection, arising from the expatriation of the Jews, to the fulfillment of the predictive promise we are now considering. More than four hundred years after the prediction was uttered, the seed of Abram came out from the land of Egypt, where they had been greatly oppressed, with great substance, and were put in possession of the land promised to them in the prediction, with assurances that, unless they alienated their possession by rebellion against their sovereign Benefactor, that land should be theirs in perpetuity. This was the final

accomplishment of the prediction. Of the accurate accomplishment of that portion of the prediction which regarded the fortunes of this people, prior to their obtaining possession of the promised land, the history of their descent into Egypt, of what they there suffered, of their deliverance and departure thence, is ample evidence, and need not be dwelt upon, as every reader of the Bible must be familiar with it.

2. The second prophecy, asking our consideration, is recorded in *Isa.* xxxiv, 5-14, *Jer.* xlix, 7-18, *Ezek.* xxxv, 2-4, *Amos* i, 11-12, and *Obadiah*, 1-16. Though there are five prophets here cited, who prophesied independently of each other and at various times, yet we consider the prophecy as being *identical*—it being, in all of them, of the same tenor and to the same effect. When this prophecy was first uttered, Edom, Idumea or Mount Seir—for the same country is indicated by all these various names—was in a flourishing condition and imagined itself secure from utter overthrow. This confidence reposed, in a great degree, on the character of the country in general, and on the strength of their fortified cities in particular. Their capital city, which, in one language, is called Bozrah, and, in another, Petra, both which signify Rock, was remarkable, at once, for, its almost impregnable strength, and for the difficulty of a hostile approach.

The tenor of the prediction, by all these prophets, was, 1st, That the nation of Edomites or Idumeans should be wholly exterminated: 2nd, That their cities in general, and Bozrah in particular, should cease to be inhabited, save by wild beasts and solitary birds; and, 3d, That the country itself should become “an utter desolation.” For

many centuries, the very territory of Idumea was lost to the civilized geographer. The memory of the Edomites, save as preserved in the Bible, and in a few other very ancient writings, had perished from the minds of men ; and her cities have lain in such utter desolation, that their very existence was unknown, except to a few Bedouin Arabs, who knew not to what people to ascribe their origin. Within about a century, three or four daring travelers have traversed the inhospitable desert, which surrounds, and, indeed, constitutes what was once the populous country of Idumea ; and their report of its condition bears testimony to the most exact fulfillment of the prediction which was uttered more than two thousand five hundred years ago, by some of these prophets. That country, once so populous and fruitful, is now desert and barren. Those cities, so magnificent and well-defended, are now either in oblivious ruin, or are mere skeletons of their former magnificence and strength — like the half-decayed skeleton of the Mastodon, the remains of Bozrah show that it was once great. Its habitations, tombs, theatres and temples remain in sufficient preservation to show that a mighty and cultivated people were once dwellers in this City of *the Rock*; that here they lived and died — here they cultivated polite amusements, and worshiped some god, with imposing rites and pompous ceremonials. The country, on which these mighty cities depended, is now a sterile waste of sand and rocks, where scarcely sufficient pastureage grows to afford nourishment to the horses and camels of the few struggling Arabs that roam these deserts. So strikingly is accomplished a prediction of perpetual desolation to a country, and ruin to a people, which, twenty-five centuries ago, when the predi-

tion was uttered, were flourishing in all the characters of distinguished prosperity!

One expression, in the prediction, however, has been thought irreconcilable with the actual state of things, in regard to the condition of Idumea; and, therefore, it is concluded that the prediction has not been fulfilled. This expression is found in *Isa.* xxxiv, 10, and is as follows: "None shall pass through it forever." Now, it is certain, that, besides the Arabs, who habitually pass through the land of Idumea, one civilized Christian traveler, at least, has passed through it, from end to end. Either, then, this expression is not to be understood in this rigorous sense, or the prediction has not been fulfilled. Mr. Stephens, late of New York, the traveler alluded to above, understood this expression less strictly, and, we think, much more rationally. It is certain that the main route, for commercial caravans, once passed through Edom, from Syria and Palestine to Elath, or Eziongeber, an important port of the Red Sea. Now, it would have been a matter of no sort of importance, to a country, in a state of general desolation, whether individuals casually passed through it or not; but, it would be of very great importance, in describing the coming desolation of a country, to notice the perpetual obstruction and disuse of an important commercial thoroughfare; as that obstruction and disuse would be at once both a cause and a consequence of such desolation. Mr. Stephens, therefore, understands the declaration, "None shall pass through it any more," etc., as meaning, that the important commercial route, which traversed the country of Idumea, and on which much of the prosperity of that country depended, should be broken up, and disused forever. After Mr. Stephens had passed

through Idumea, in all its length, and had visited the ruins of its ancient capital, Bozrah, he says, in relation to the prophecy in general, and to this part of it in particular, “Even though I had been a confirmed skeptic, I had seen enough, in wandering, with the Bible in my hand, in that unpeopled desert, to tear up the very foundations of unbelief, and scatter its fragments to the winds.”

3. The third prophecy, of the Old Testament, to which we shall invite your attention, respects the fate of Babylon, just coming to the acme of its greatness, at the time the prophecy was delivered. You will find this prophecy recorded in *Isa.* xiii, 17–22, in the following terms: “Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver; and, as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb: their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there: but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there; and wild beasts of the island shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces; and her time is near to come, and her days shall not be prolonged.” To the same purpose are many other predictions, both of Isaiah and others of the prophets. In this prophecy, Babylon is called “the glory of kingdoms, —the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency;” and, according

to historians, this eulogy is not at all extravagant. It was, as we are informed by the historian, an exact square of fifteen miles, containing an area of no less than two hundred and twenty-five square miles. It was surrounded by a wall, constructed of large bricks cemented by bitumen. This wall was three hundred and fifty feet in height, and eighty-seven feet in thickness; and was surrounded by a wide and deep ditch, lined with brick and filled with water. The capacity of the ditch may be inferred from the fact that the bricks, of which the wall was constructed, were made of the clay dug from it. There were twenty-five gates on each side of the city, all of which were made of solid brass; and, between every two of these gates, were three towers. A tower was at each corner, and three towers between each of these and the next gate on every side. Corresponding with these gates, were streets, running through the whole extent of the city, and crossing each other at right angles. Besides these streets, which were one hundred and fifty feet wide, there was one broad street running all around the city, between the wall and the outer row of houses. This street was two hundred feet broad. Thus the city was disposed in six hundred and seventy-six squares, of equal magnitude; being each five-eighths of a mile, including the breadth of a street. The houses stood only upon the streets—the interior of the squares being occupied as gardens, yards, and pleasure-grounds. From this statement may be gathered the greatness and strength of Babylon. The filling up of this grand outline was worthy of it in all respects. But it does not correspond to the design of this Discourse to enter into such particulars as would be involved in a description of bridges, temples,

palaces and hanging-gardens. Its situation was, as might well be inferred from its greatness and magnificence, in the highest degree eligible—being in the heart of a most fertile country, and on the banks of the great and navigable river Euphrates. Its strength rendered it highly improbable that it should be taken by assault; and, being stored with provisions for twenty years, it was equally improbable that it should be taken by siege. But, even admitting that it should be taken, who could have imagined, considering its greatness and grandeur, and the peculiar eligibility of its situation, that it would, by the conqueror, be abandoned to ruin? Yet, so was it determined, in the councils of Him, who doeth His pleasure upon earth; and so was it predicted, two thousand five hundred and fifty years ago. This *glory of kingdoms* was to sink into utter desolation; and the place of this *beauty of the Chaldees' excellency*, was to become the haunt of doleful and loathsome beasts, and birds, and reptiles. Man was to forsake, after having destroyed it: so that even the Arab should not pitch the tent of his temporary sojourning in it, nor shepherds rest in its habitations, while their flocks were feeding in the ample plains by which it was surrounded. But, by what means was this utter desolation of a city, so favorably situated, so strongly and beautifully built, to be brought to pass?

No folly of man could have been so great as, intentionally, to destroy a possession of so much value! How, then, was it to be brought about? In the first place, in taking the City, Cyrus, at the head of the Persian and Median armies, with immense labor, diverted the main body of the water flowing through the City, in the Euphrates, into a canal dug for the purpose. This had two

pernicious effects upon the condition of Babylon. It rendered the navigation of the Euphrates to the City difficult, if not impracticable — cutting off, by this means, one of the main sources of wealth and even of comfort which it had previously enjoyed. Meantime, the waters of the river, thrown out of their proper channel, by this contrivance of Cyrus, spread themselves over the low grounds in the neighborhood of the City, creating immense swamps, destroying large tracts of fertile land, upon the cultivation of which the City had depended for much of its supplies, and generating the causes of disease, in the miasma of the swamp, created by the spread of waters. In the second place, the building of Seleucia, by the Macedonian conquerors, and the Ctesiphon by the later Persians, in the neighborhood of Babylon, drew away its inhabitants; till, finally, it was so utterly deserted by men, that the kings of Persia established a park for wild beasts over its site — bringing thus together, on this devoted spot, the wild beasts of the desert and the wild beasts of the islands, which latter had established themselves in the lakes and swamps formed about the City. Now, and for ages past, even the site of this once glorious City is unknown; but, what is supposed to be that site, answers so accurately, in its character of fearful desolation, to the representation in the prophecy, as affords presumptive evidence of its identity. No history of the forlorn condition of what was Babylon, written at the present time, could more justly describe its actual state, than it is described in the prophecy, uttered when it was in the height of its splendor, and in the maturity of its strength, with no indications of its fading glory or its wasting energy. And, is not this a clear case of prophecy? What could be clearer?

4. We shall cite one more prophecy from the Old Testament, which you will find in *Isa.* lii, 13-15, and the *fifty-third Chapter entire*. It describes a Personage, remarkable for purity and sincerity, for innocence and meekness, for patience and prudence; but, especially is He described as remarkable for His benevolence towards mankind, in submitting to bear their sorrows, to suffer for their sins, and to make intercession for them, while their hearts were mad with rage, and their hands lifted up in rebellion against Him. Not less remarkable is represented the reception He was to meet with, from those whom it was His business, in His life and suffering, to benefit. They would see no form nor comeliness in Him, to render Him desirable. Hence, they would despise and reject Him, and would, contemplating His sorrows and sufferings, esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted as a transgressor. He would be imprisoned, tried, and, though innocent as a lamb, would be led to the slaughter—in which slaughter, He was to be numbered and associated with the wicked; and, yet, He was, because of His immaculate purity, notwithstanding the ignominy of His death, to have His grave with the rich. After having been thus ignominiously slaughtered, after having rendered His soul an offering for the sin of those in whose behalf He was bruised, wounded and slain, He would be exalted, extolled and elevated — should see His seed, the travail of His soul — should prolong His days, and the pleasure of Jehovah should prosper in His hands, especially in that many, whose iniquities He had borne, and for whom He had made intercession, should be justified by the knowledge of Him; so that He should be satisfied for all His humiliation, shame and suffering, in the triumph of His benevolent

exertions in behalf of the human race. To no other person known to history, but to Jesus Christ, is this description applicable. To Him, it is so exactly applicable, that, by Christians, Isaiah, for thus accurately delineating the character of their Divine Master, seven centuries before that character was displayed to the world, in His life, has been called the *evangelical prophet*; and the Earl of Rochester, one of the greatest wits and most determined infidels, of the licentious age of Charles the Second, of England, who undertook the overthrow of the Christian religion, was convinced, by examining *this* prophecy, and comparing it with the Gospel history, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that the Christian Religion is a Revelation from God. So exactly is the character, delineated in this prophecy, suited to Jesus Christ, and so exclusively is it suited to Him, that we candidly affirm it to be our opinion that no man, of sound understanding, can compare the prophecy with the biography of Jesus Christ, recollecting that the prophecy was extant among the Jews seven hundred years before Christ lived, without being convinced, as the Earl of Rochester was.

We shall notice but one prophecy contained in the New Testament; not because there are not many which are well worthy the most attentive consideration, but, because this Discourse is already becoming too long; and, because, either that those prophecies have not yet received their fulfillment, or that their complete fulfillment is matter of New Testament record—a circumstance which allows the suspicion that the prophecy and the fulfillment may have been fitted to each other by the writer. We say ‘*allows* the suspicion’—it by no means *authorizes* it. The prophecy you are now to consider is in *Luke* xix,

43, 44, and is in these words: "The days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation." This terrible comminatory prediction was addressed to Jerusalem, then in a flourishing condition, and under the protecting wing of the Roman Eagle. As yet, those seditions and insurrections against the Roman authority, which led on to the destruction of Jerusalem, had not displayed themselves, nor were there any sufficient tendencies to such seditions and insurrections evinced to warrant a prediction, by political sagacity alone, of the hostility of the now friendly and protecting government of Rome. But, had it been otherwise, who would have risked his character of prophet, by predicting, without Divine impulse, that the Romans would take the City, which even Titus declared he could never have taken, if Jehovah had not fought against it? Or, even supposing that the City should be taken, who would have dared to predict its utter destruction by the conqueror? Who would have thought of such a thing? Would he not wish to preserve a City of so much note as Jerusalem was; if only as a monument of his own glory, in subduing it? Would he not, at least, wish to preserve that Temple, which was the crown of architectural glory? We are informed that Titus, the Roman General, did wish and endeavor to preserve them. But a more effective determination than that of Titus, had decreed their ruin, and that decree he could not disannul. The inhabitants of Jerusalem knew not—valued not the time of

their visitation—they “rejected the counsel of God against themselves”—accepted not, nay, crucified the Messiah of God, who was sent to them for their salvation, and invoked the punishment of His blood-shedding upon themselves and their children, and, therefore, their house was left unto them desolate — therefore, the awful prediction, we are now considering, was fulfilled upon them to the uttermost. The destruction of Jerusalem was described by Josephus, a Jewish Priest, an eye witness of the event; and, so minutely exact is the coincidence of the prediction with the account, both of the siege, and of the destruction of Jerusalem, that, leaving the spirit of prophecy out of view, we must suspect that the historian had had the prophecy in his view, and had studiously conformed his narrative to *its* description of those events. Such a coincidence no sober-minded man could possibly believe to have been fortuitous. The truth is, that He, who uttered the prediction, saw the “end from the beginning,” and spoke of events that had not yet occurred, as clearly as though they were already existing. This, then, is another clear case of prophecy.

The argument from miracles, in support of the position that the Bible is the word of God, is shortly this—A miracle can be performed only by the power of God; but, God would not exert His power in confirmation of a pretended Revelation of Himself and His will; and, therefore, when a miracle is performed to attest a professed Revelation from God, we are authorized to conclude that that Revelation is what it professes to be. A Revelation, attested by miracles, is, thereby, proved to be a Revelation from God. The Bible is attested by miracles, and claims to be a Revelation; therefore the Bible is a

Revelation from God. Prophecy is a species of miracle, in which not the power, but the prescience of God is exerted; and the argument which is valid in regard to the employment of the former attribute, is equally so in regard to that of the latter. We can no more believe that God would attest a pretended Revelation, by endowing its promulgator with science to foretell future events, than that He would endow him with power to raise the dead. As we think we have made it abundantly appear that miracles, both of power and of science, have been wrought, to attest the Bible, as a Revelation from God, we shall conclude that the Bible contains the Word of God, and shall close this part of the argument.

3. We would argue that the Scriptures, especially those of the New Testament, are the Word of God, from the fact, that the promulgators of this professed Revelation could have had no other motive but the obligation of truth, to deliver their testimony in its support *as such*—that, in fact, they had the strongest possible motives, *this* excepted, to suppress that testimony. Let it be distinctly recollected that the writers of the New Testament Scriptures do not give their *opinions*, but state *facts*. They profess to tell us, not what they *believe*, but what they *know*. It is well known that opinion may have all the influence on practice, that knowledge would have; and that the falsehood of an opinion does not, in the smallest degree, lessen its efficiency. Men have patiently suffered and cheerfully died in support of opinions most egregiously false. They believed those opinions true, and, therefore, love of truth sustained them in suffering and dying for them. But, who ever heard of any one suffering long and patiently, and dying, resigned and

cheerful, in attestation of a fact that he knew to be false? The facts recorded in the New Testament, however mysterious in their metaphysical relations they might be, were, considered simply as facts, such as no man of common-sense could fail to understand. For instance: when they were upon the Lake Genesareth, in a storm, and received their Master into the ship from the water, on which He had been walking, could the disciples be mistaken? Or, when they heard Him say, to the winds, raging with violence, and to the waves, dashing with fury, "Peace, be still!" and, when they saw an instant calm succeed the violence of the storm, how could they fail to understand the facts in the case? Or, how could they be in error, in regard to the *facts*, when they saw their Master take the daughter of Jairus, whom all admitted to be dead, or the widow's son of Nain, who was being carried out to be buried, by the hand, and, by a simple command to arise, restore them to life, and to their friends? And, so, with regard to nearly all the miracles, by which Jesus authenticated His Mission and His Revelation.

Now, in delivering their testimony, in regard to the pretensions and doctrines of the Messiah, and to the miracles by which He established those pretensions and authenticated those doctrines, His disciples knew beforehand that they could hope for no worldly advantage; but, on the contrary, that they would incur all the various forms of worldly evil that the malice of wicked men, inveterately opposed to their Master, could inflict on them. They knew that they would be dissociated from Jews and Gentiles — that men would "separate them from their company," as pestiferous and vile; that they would be liable to lawless violence, upon both their

property and their persons, for which they could expect to obtain, if they should even seek it, no redress; besides, that they should be liable to fines and confiscations, by the civil authority; that their reputation would be placed at the mercy of every slanderous tongue, which would say, "all manner of evil of them," till their names should be cast out, as the concentration of wickedness, and, finally, that "whosoever should kill them," either by lawless violence or by legal forms, should glory in the bloody deed, as having thereby done "God service." All this they knew; for, their Master had taught them to expect all this; and they had, moreover, in the fate of that Master, beheld the character of their own destiny. Nor, were they long in confirming the apprehensions they were thus taught to entertain, by ample experience of the malignity with which the world regarded their adherence to Jesus, and the violence with which they would wreak that malignity upon those who were steadfast in their testimony to His character and works. And, is it not utterly improbable that men, in their senses, with the warnings of their Master still sounding in their ears, and with the awful premonitions of what they were to expect, manifested in the treatment their Master received in the desecrated temple, in the polluted judgment hall of Pilate, and in the bloody scenes of Calvary, should, even while the storm of popular fury still raged, with unabated violence, stand up, in the most public places in Jerusalem, and bear their testimony to the facts of the Gospel history, if they had not known those facts to be true? Nothing could exceed the absurdity of this supposition, unless, perhaps, the supposition that the high-born Saul of Tarsus should have become a witness for Jesus, without

resistless evidence of the truth of the testimony he was to bear. What absurdity could be greater than to suppose that he, whose education had been most strictly Pharisaical, that is, most inimical to Christ; who had, with a conscience of doing right, engaged heartily in persecuting the disciples of Jesus, and who was in a course of employment, by the ecclesiastical authorities of Judea, which promised him the most enviable as well as speedy promotion, should renounce all his prejudices, abandon all his high connections, and forego all his probable honors, to follow a *crucified* Master, in poverty and in disgrace, to a violent death; unless the facts, which he assures us were distinctly made known to him, in person, by Jesus Christ, particularly the fact of His resurrection, were undeniably authentic, and the Revelation they attested really from God, and of the utmost importance to man? Lord Lyttleton had good reason to affirm that the "Conversion and Apostleship of St. Paul," the same as Saul of Tarsus, "in the circumstances in which they occurred, were sufficient of themselves, to establish a moral certainty that the Christian Religion is from God." It is a principle in law, that testimony given in the article of death, is of the highest authority. Paul assures us that, as a Christian apostle, "he had the sentence of death in himself;" and, most solemnly asseverates that his life was a *daily death*. The testimony which he bore, then, was of this highest order; for, so far as moral effect was concerned, he was *always* in what lawyers call *extremis*. Nor, was he, in this particular, peculiar. All the apostles, and, indeed, all the primitive Christians, those especially who publicly testified in behalf of their religion, were every moment, liable to become the victims of their

adherence to that testimony. Yet, how many there were, "who were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word of Christ," who "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods;" who suffered themselves to become the hated of all men, to be considered "the filth and the offscouring of all things," and who even "counted not their lives dear unto themselves, so that they might finish their course with joy, and the ministry which they had received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God." And what could have induced them to and sustained them in this course, but a perfect persuasion that the testimony which they delivered was true? Or, what could have produced this persuasion, in the case of eye-witnesses, if, in very deed, the mighty works ascribed to Him, had not been performed by Jesus Christ in authentication of His mission and His doctrines—in other words, if the Scriptures of the New Testament were not known by them to be the Word of God.

4. Another argument, to prove that the Scriptures are the Word of God, may be drawn from the success with which they were attended, *first*, in bringing the Israelites under the authority of those of the Old Testament; and, *secondly*, in the rapid spread of the Gospel, throughout Judea, and, then, during the lifetime of the apostles, extensively in Asia, Africa and Europe. In about three hundred years, so extensively was it spread, and its authority recognized, that what was called the Empire of the world was subjected, at least nominally, to its dominion. Be the spirit or precepts of the Gospel right or wrong, of God or from some other agency and teaching, this, at least, is certain — that they are not in accordance with the temper and propensities of human nature; nay, that they

are directly repugnant to them. How, then, are we to account for the spread of the Gospel in the world, with such astonishing and unexampled rapidity ? Most of the apostles and other primitive teachers of Christianity, were plain, unlettered men, without the logic of sophists and the rhetoric of orators. The principal exception to this rule informs us himself, that he labored under some disadvantages of person and utterance, which rendered his personal ministry weak and contemptible, in the estimation of fastidious hearers. The sect, called Christians, was despised, as consisting of poor, mean-spirited and unsocial persons — hating all, and deserving by all to be hated. Not only were they not sustained, in their efforts for the spread of the Gospel, by the influence of priests and by the authority of magistrates, but both were in stern and irreconcilable hostility to their enterprise. The utmost that the most benevolent and upright magistrates would concede, in their behalf, was that they should not be sought for to be punished ; but even such magistrates decreed that, when accused, unless they retracted their Christianity, they must suffer. Now, in these circumstances, and with a religion and morality to which human nature is, and always has been, inveterately hostile, what would have carried the Gospel beyond the limits of Judea ? What could have spread it over all the regions of the earth, where the Greek, Latin and Hebrew, or Chaldaic and cognate languages were spoken, in the short space of forty years from the crucifixion of its Author, as a malefactor and a *slave* ? What, in about three hundred years, could have placed it on the throne of the Cæsars ? What, so soon, could have rendered it the supreme law of the Roman world ? Can it be accounted for on any ordinary

principles of human calculation? We think not. We verily believe that, unless the primitive teachers of Christianity had been able to bring indisputable evidence of Divine attestation to the Gospel, especially in regard to the Resurrection of Christ, we never should have heard of that Gospel, or should have heard of it merely as an *ill devised and abortive attempt* at imposition. Nor, does it materially affect the argument that, in the wide-spreading of the Gospel, many of those who ostensibly embraced it were not sincere. Men do not embrace what they hate, without some powerful motive to influence them. We suppose such a motive to have resulted from the manifest authenticity of the Gospel, putting the reputation for intelligence or honesty, of those who rejected it, in jeopardy with the people. The people, unsophisticated by theories, unrestrained by the pride of superior discernment, uninfluenced by considerations of conflicting interests, sooner perceive and bow to the force of newly discovered truth, than those who are more cultivated, but more fettered by established habits of thinking and restrained by pride of reputation, and the interest attached to settled modes of applying the principles which have been before received and relied upon. But, whenever the mass of the people addict themselves to opinions which regulate practice, whether in social or political morality, those who are considered the *elite* soon follow, whether honestly or not, in the route of the multitude. The Gospel, until it had gained the honest convictions of the mass of the community, by the resistless force of its *appreciated* evidence, never could exert this indirect influence which we have just considered. On the contrary, that indirect influence was opposed to it; and, therefore, its

earliest disciples, in every distinct community, must have been honest in their acceptance of it, as they not only had no motive to receive it insincerely, but had, moreover, the strongest possible motives not thus to receive it. We conclude, therefore, that, without overpowering evidence of its Divine authority, the Gospel never could have spread at all, much less could have gone on, conquering obstacles, and winning its widening way, till the Roman world was captive to its strength of evidence and its force of influence. We shall now attempt to sustain,

II. Our second proposition, that this “Word, or Revelation of God is *Truth*;” *i. e.*, that it represents truly the Divine character, and the nature, the condition, the obligations, the duties and the capabilities of man. We shall be able to do little more than state the various terms of this proposition—so much time has been occupied in treating the first part of our subject. We can judge of *truth*, in the representations of the Divine character, which we find in the Scriptures, only by our own view of their *reasonableness*—there being no other standard by which we can test them. The same is true, to some extent, with regard to what concerns man, especially to what concerns his capabilities.

The representations of the character of God are that He is one God, and that there is none other—that He is without beginning or cause, and without dependence, or change, or end—that He is a Spirit, a Being purely intelligent and moral in His nature—that all the attributes of His nature are in infinite perfection, His wisdom and power, His holiness and goodness, His justice and His truth being wholly incapable of either addition or limitation—that He is the Creator of the heavens and of the

earth, and of all things that are in them, whether inanimate, animate, intellectual or spiritual existences; and, that, as He is their Creator, so He upholds, subsists, and continues in being all that exists—that He is the rightful and righteous Sovereign of all the creatures He hath made and that are sustained by Him,—and that He is, therefore, entitled to the homage and obedience of all such creatures as are capable of rendering such homage and service, and will adjudge to all such the reward or the punishment they have deserved, by their obedience or disobedience to His requirements. *These* representations of the character of God are recognized, by all who have read the Bible, as being found there. There are *other* representations, which far the greater number of Christians, and we among them, believe to be clearly contained in the Bible, which, by many, are denied to be there made. *We* find, in the Bible, a distinct representation of a Trinity of equal Persons in the Unity of the Godhead, known, in relation to the plan of human salvation, as Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. These Three Persons we understand the Scriptures clearly to represent One God. The mode of the Divine existence is not attempted to be explained, though represented; and hence, we do not profess to understand *how* these Three Persons are One God, though we believe the fact. We, nevertheless, do understand that they are not *Three*, in the *same respect* that they are *One*. This would be impossible and absurd; but, we can conceive that these Persons may, in *another sense* than they are Three, be One; though we understand not *how* they are so. This Trinity in Unity we understand to be not only clearly a doctrine of Revelation, but one, moreover, on which the truth of other important Revelations of the

Bible essentially depend. It is not, however, our present purpose to go into an argument to show that this is a part of the representation of the Divine character, contained in the Bible, our business now being to insist on the truth of what is revealed, rather than to contend with other Christians concerning the meaning of certain parts of the representations contained in such Revelation. All agree that the Bible represents the Deity as One; and all *must* agree that this one God is represented as acting, in regard to human events, under the designations of The Father, The Son, and The Holy Ghost; and, whether proper personality, or merely official designation is intended by these denominations, is, though an important question, not within the scope of our *present* purpose.

Whether the above representations of the Divine character be true or false, they are peculiar to the Bible. The wisest people, without a Revelation, who ever lived on the earth, peopled the universe with no less than thirty thousand gods, not one of whom was without beginning or dependence in his existence. He, who was their supreme divinity, Jupiter, was supreme by usurpation upon the rights of his own father, Saturn, and was limited in his power, by that indefinite, inscrutable, non-existent thing denominated *Fate* or *Necessity*. Creatures of Time, and limited in their powers, the deities of Greece, were agitated by the passions, and addicted to the vices which prevail among men. Their best and greatest gods were lascivious, irascible, revengeful, treacherous; and, upon sufficient temptation, would *lie* like Cretans. In short, their character was just such as, in any well-ordered community of Christians, would subject a man to utter infamy. And, if such were the gods of Greece and Rome, where

philosophy and poetry and eloquence were carried to the highest degree of excellence, what must have been their characters among men who enjoyed not these advantages! Suns, and stars, and planets ; men and beasts, and birds ; creeping things, and vegetables, and rocks — whatever a disordered imagination endowed with attributes either favorable or formidable, were deified, worshiped and feared by men in a state of barbarism or of semi-civilization. We affirm that nothing could be more *reasonable* than the representations of the Divine character, found in the Bible ; and we also affirm that those representations are to be found no where else, in the pages of religious history or philosophy, unless taken from the Bible.

The representations, in the Scriptures, of the nature, conditions, obligations, duties and capabilities of man, have all the characters of truth which belong to those that concern the character of the Deity. Man is there represented as partly a material and partly a spiritual being — as intelligent and moral in his nature — as in a condition of utter dependence on God, for life, in its beginning and continuance, and for all good things — as being degraded and depraved or disordered in his moral tendencies, and under condemnation by the law of his Sovereign Creator, for its violation — as obliged to render to God the homage of all his moral affections, and of all his active powers, in a constant employment of all those affections and powers to His glory — as obliged to consider man as his fellow creature, and to regard him with an affection, and observe towards him a conduct, such as, in his own case, he expects or desires to be rendered to him by man. The particular duties, under both these obligations, are clearly stated in the Bible, all comprised within

the comprehensive requirements — “to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with God.” Of the capabilities of man, much is said in the sacred volume. Created in the image of God, intelligent, moral, holy and righteous, he *was* capable of acting well his part, and of enjoying, to the fullest extent, the advantages of his situation. And he was also capable of abusing his moral power, by disobeying his Sovereign — thereby forfeiting the advantages proper to his position, and divesting himself of his capability of well-doing. He *did* thus *abuse* his moral power, and did thus forfeit his advantages, and divest himself of his capability of discharging his high duties: so that he became guilty, ruined and helpless, with only a capability to suffer the ill-effects of his folly and of his sin. But, the Scriptures reveal to us a remedial scheme, in which atonement is made, by one of the Persons of the Godhead, incarnated in humanity for that purpose; an influence is exerted by another of those Persons, which restores the cast-off ability to serve and please God, while the other Person of the Godhead, in consideration of the merits of the atonement made for man, extends pardon to those who profit by the influence exerted upon them, to observe the course prescribed for them as sinners, in repenting towards God, and believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost are represented as being engaged to restore man to his original capabilities; yet, so, as not to destroy his moral nature and accountable relation. But, even when men are restored to a capability to serve and please God, and to enjoy the advantages of their position, the same influence, which restored them, and the same merit, through which they were restored, is necessary to a continuance of their capabilities in these

respects. The Scriptures represent the capabilities of fallen man for salvation, to be, from first to last, only of grace. To these capabilities the Scriptures, in their representations, add that of immortality — an immortality, after the resurrection of the body, of the entire man — an immortality to those who profit by the plan of recovery, devised and operated by Divine Benevolence, of happiness commensurate to those powers of enjoyment which renovated human nature will possess — and an immortality of such suffering as can be endured by a spiritual existence, under the curse of Omnipotence, to those who reject the counsel of God against themselves. Such, briefly, are the interesting representations, which the Scriptures afford us, of the nature, conditions, obligations, duties and capabilities of man. And, which of these representations does not commend itself to the reason of every sober-minded man, to whom they have been distinctly made ? And, how utterly unlike are they to the representations of those things, which men, untaught of Heaven, are found to make !

We shall now bring this long discourse to a close, recapitulating, briefly, the various topics of argument, which have been treated above. We first, after assuming a few points, as either unquestionable, or, probably unquestioned by our audience, argued that it was probable, *a priori*, that God would make a Revelation of Himself and of His will to man: because, 1, It was important for man, in order to his properly worshiping and serving God, to have an adequate knowledge of God, and of His will; and, 2, Because without such a Revelation, he could not have the knowledge of either the one or the other. We next observed that there is extant a

Volume of Tracts, written by different persons, at various and distant times, claiming to contain Revelations of God and His will, which maintain a striking consistency throughout, even when a change of dispensation, or mode of administering the Divine Government took place ; that these Revelations were not isolated and inoperative, but intended for practical operation, in forming peculiar and discriminated communities ; that the principles on which such societies were to be formed were incongruous to the tempers and propensities of human nature ; that all these characters were unsuitable to the supposition that the Bible is either a fable or an imposture. We further observed, that these Sacred Writings, though oftener copied and translated than all other books together, have been preserved in such inviolate integrity, that no important fact or doctrine has been affected by the various readings, of which there are many, produced by numerous copyings and translations.

We next considered the evidence from miracles, by which the claims of these professed Revelations were authenticated ; and, we particularly examined six of these miracles, three from the Old, and three from the New Testament. We represented prophecy as a peculiar kind of miracle ; and considered several prophecies, with their respective fulfillments. The *gist* of the argument from miracles, we stated to be, that God only could perform miracles ; that He would not perform them in support of imposture ; that He had performed them to authenticate the Revelations in the Bible, and that, therefore, those Revelations were from God — were the *Word of God*. We next considered the evidence for the validity of the Revelations of the Bible, especially of the New Testament,

arising from the facts that the promulgators of the Gospel, who were eye-witnesses to the matters concerning which they testified, could not have been mistaken in regard to the facts,— and could have had no inducement to deceive others, by a false deposition in regard to those facts; but had, on the contrary, apart from the obligation of truth, the strongest possible motives to suppress their testimony. Our last argument, to prove the proposition, that *the Bible is a Revelation from God*, was taken from the success of the promulgation of its contents in the world. That success could not have been calculated on, either from the congeniality of its doctrines and precepts to the temper and propensities of human nature — from the superior human qualifications of its advocates, or from the favorable disposition towards it, entertained by men of influence and authority. On the contrary, in all these respects, probability was decidedly and strongly against its success. But, it did succeed; and this can be accounted for, only on the supposition that the Gospel is a Revelation from God and important to man. Our final attempt was to show that this Revelation from God is TRUTH; that is, that it truly represents the Divine character, and the nature, the condition, the obligations, the duties and the capabilities of man. How far we have succeeded in our arduous attempt, we may not presume to judge.

If the Bible is a Revelation from the God of truth, and, if it presents to man the most important of all truths, how extreme must be the culpable folly of those who neglect acquaintance with its contents! how extreme the wicked madness of those who reject the authority of its requirements! And, how unutterable the goodness of God, in

giving us “ His word, to be a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths, to guide our feet in the way of peace ! ” With these reflections, we conclude ; only commending this feeble attempt to glorify God, to His merciful consideration and efficient patronage. Amen!

DISCOURSE II.

THE EXISTENCE, MANNER OF EXISTENCE, NATURE AND PERFECTIONS OF GOD.

"To us there is but one God." — 1 CORINTHIANS, viii, 6.

THE existence of God is a necessary doctrine in every system of religion, whether *revealed* or *natural*; and is so congenial to the dictates of reason and common sense that it has been believed in every nation, with whose history we are sufficiently acquainted to have ascertained what they did believe. It is true, that, with regard to the character to be ascribed to this Divine Being, opinions have been exceedingly various, according to the means of information from which such opinions were derived; but with respect to the simple fact, that there is a Supreme Being, there has been so little difference, that it may be said to be established by *common consent*. There may be some who do not believe the fact of such an existence; but, they are so few, that many who even deny the authority of the Bible, as the word of God, maintain the utter impossibility of such incredulity among rational beings. And, indeed, there is so much reasonableness in the character of an Atheist drawn by the Psalmist at a single stroke—"The fool hath said in his heart there is no God,"—that few have the hardihood to avow it, in the face of the world, if they are even so unfortunate as to be conscious of it themselves.

But, although almost every man believes there is a Supreme Being at the head of the universe, yet, to a

great proportion of them, it is about the same as if there were no God; for, to them, the doctrine of the existence of such a Being is a matter of mere speculation — exercising no influence over either their principles, their practice or their enjoyment. As a general rule, “God is not in all their thoughts,” or if the recollection of His existence sometimes forces itself upon them, it either passes unmarked through their minds without leaving any lasting impression, or is banished with eager haste; because the impression it makes is unpleasant. Now, it cannot but be manifest, that, if there be a God, His existence must be one of the most interesting facts with which we can be conversant; especially when it is considered that, as our Creator and Benefactor, He is entitled to our homage and service. Even Natural Religion, in its rudest forms, has ever required that this homage should be rendered to Him, in worship, reverence, gratitude and obedience. We know not therefore, dear brethren, that we could better occupy your attention, on this occasion, than by engaging you in the contemplation of the existence of this Divine Being, the manner of that existence, His nature and his attributes or perfections; and by endeavoring to fix an indelible impression of them upon your minds and hearts. Of His existence we say,

I. There is a Supreme Intelligence, an Eternal Mind, “God over all, blessed forevermore.” It is not our purpose to enter fully into a discussion of those arguments derived from the wonders of nature, which go to establish the truth of this proposition. We have only to open our eyes, and evidences, clear, strong and innumerable, will stream in upon us, from every quarter, attesting the fact, that an unoriginated, omnipotent and infinitely diffusive

Operator produced the order of things, to which we have given the denomination of NATURE. The beauty, the grandeur, the utility of this order of things, and the nice adaptation of the several parts to the whole, display a presence in every part; a skill and an energy that could belong to only an infinitely perfect, and, therefore, an independently-existing Being. Nor, will it be necessary to accumulate proofs of the truth of this proposition, from the Sacred Scriptures. *They* not only abound in testimonies to the existence of God, but are, in fact, founded on that doctrine, as their great corner-stone. It is fundamental to every history they record, to every doctrine they teach, to every duty they inculcate, and to every system they establish. They announce themselves as the voice, the oracles, the revelations of God; and, therefore, *assume* the fact of His existence, as not needing to be proved, or as being sufficiently established by the single fact of their own existence. But we do deem it proper to urge upon you the frequent, the habitual consideration of this most important fact — the associating of it with all the interests in which you are concerned and with every train of thought in which you indulge. Such is the fatal propensity to forget God, which prevails in every unrenewed human heart, that it has always been found necessary to reiterate the impression of His existence upon the mind, by a frequent repetition of the simple statement of the fact of His existence, and, much more, by often repeated exhibitions of His adorable perfections. And, indeed, this last appears to us so necessary in order to our having any clear or practical conviction of the Divine existence itself, that we shall employ the present occasion chiefly in presenting those perfections to your consideration. In

doing this, we dare not indulge in any fanciful speculation, nor trust to the discoveries of the unassisted human understanding, or the inductions of uninspired reason, but shall be wholly guided by that Revelation which God has seen it proper to make of Himself: fully assured that none but He could give any just or adequate information on these most important subjects. Before proceeding to exhibit the Divine perfections, we deem it necessary, briefly, to consider the *manner of the existence of God*, and his essential nature ; and,

II. Of the manner of God's existence we say,

1, God is *self-existent*. This proposition, from the utter inadequacy of human language to express the deep things of God, may convey an incorrect idea of the fact intended to be represented by it. It certainly is not intended to convey the idea that God *originated* His own existence. This would be a palpable absurdity. But, it is intended to convey the idea that the existence of God is independent of all without Himself. In other words, it is intended to represent Him as an unoriginated existence. No rational being, who thinks closely upon the subject, can avoid the conviction, that, somewhere in the universe, as the source or cause of all other existence, there *must exist* some Being, who exists without origination, and, consequently, without beginning. This being is God—the God of the Bible. This independent, unbeginning existence of God, is strongly intimated, if not clearly expressed, in the NAME, by which God made Himself known to Israel, by Moses—"I AM THAT I AM." Ere time began — throughout time's whole progress, — and even in the ceaseless round of unending duration, *this* is the characteristic denomination of God. In all duration, He

is the I AM, not the HE WAS or the HE WILL BE. Other beings, after non-existence from eternity *have been* and *are not now* — others *now are*, — and still others who yet are not, *will be* ; but, God is *always the I AM*. Thus independent, the existence of God is unassailable and immutable. Change cannot be predicated of independent existence. In *such* an existence, what could induce a change. Dependent existence may change, in every vicissitude in the circumstances which surround it, and by which it is affected ; but, independent existence, self-supported, self-sufficient, and self-reliant, can receive no shock from without itself, can be wrought upon injuriously by no extraneous circumstances. Hence, God not only *always IS*, but is *always THE SAME*. His aspect towards other beings may, at different times, be different ; but, this infers no change in Him — on the contrary, the difference of his aspect towards those beings results from His own immutability. The change is in them ; and, as they have changed, so must their position in relation to God, and, consequently, His aspect towards them be changed.

2. God is *one*. The Unity of God, if not purely a doctrine of Revelation, is, at least exceedingly rare in the systems of religion, which do not derive their creed from that source. Modern Deism affects to consider itself independent of Revelation, in relation to this fundamental doctrine ; but, who does not know that, with rare exceptions, if indeed there were any, men, without Revelation, have always been *polytheists* ? Mahometanism is no proper exception, for Mahomet avowedly gave credit to both the Jewish and the Christian Revelations, and admitted the authority of their teachings ; though he claimed to have a *later* Revelation, of higher, but not of opposing au-

thority. And, we have no doubt that, for the doctrine of the Divine unity, he was wholly dependent on the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, and on the traditions which had their source in those Revelations. With the exception of Mahometanism, where or when has there ever existed any system of religion, in which the unity of God is a recognized truth — save the Jewish and Christian systems alone ? Nay, where shall we find an individual, who has not had an opportunity of drawing upon Divine Revelation for this doctrine, who has embraced the Divine unity as a doctrine of his religious creed ? We know not of one such. And, yet, the doctrine, that there is but one God so strongly commends itself to human reason, when it is presented fairly within her comprehension, that an enlightened infidel, of our day, would look with pity, if not with scorn, upon any one, enjoying the means of information, now within the reach of all in Christendom, who should question its truth. The enlightened Greeks and Romans not only peopled the universe with thousands of gods, but derived these divinities from others; who, superannuated, or conquered by their rebellious offspring, were deposed from the dominion they once exercised, with unquestioned authority, over the affairs of that universe ; and, though retaining the denomination, had lost the power belonging to deity. How human is all this ! And how well are these enlightened nations — untaught by Revelation however — described by St. Paul : “ Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man ” — even worse, into an image made like to “ birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things ! ” How mean and sordid these conceptions of the

Deity, when contrasted with the magnificent idea of a *sole* Divinity — a universal Sovereign — *One* God — God *ever all*.

This doctrine of the Divine unity, is carefully and diligently taught, in both the Jewish and the Christian Scriptures. Authority, ridicule and argument are all employed to show the utter absurdity of idolatry, an off-shoot of polytheism, and, we believe, always resulting from it. The two first commandments in the Decalogue, are directed against polytheism and idolatry; or, more properly, perhaps, to the inculcation of spiritual worship and devotion, to the one true and living God only. Of His exclusive right to this worship and devotion, God declares Himself to be *jealous*; and, accordingly, most of the calamities which befel the Israelites, during the whole of their existence as an independent nation, were punitive visitations by the providence of God, for their dereliction of this doctrine, and of the duties resulting from it. On the other hand, every period of their history in which the unity of God was practically recognized, by that nation, is marked by distinguished virtue and prosperity: — so important is the doctrine of the Divine unity in the estimation of the God of providence Himself! We deem it unnecessary to multiply arguments or to accumulate proofs from the Scriptures in support of this doctrine. These proofs are so numerous and so well known, and the force of these arguments so generally admitted, that to do so would be a needless tax upon your forbearance and upon our time and toil. We proceed, therefore,

III. To speak of the *nature*, — the essential nature of God; and, we say that God is a *spirit* — a pure spirit. If it be said that this proposition conveys no distinct

signification to the human mind, because none can pretend to know what spirit is, it may be answered that, for the same reason no one can understand what is meant by the proposition, that the pen, with which I write, is a material substance; because no one can pretend to know what matter is. We have, in fact, no more knowledge of the essential nature of matter than we have of the essential nature of spirit. All we know of either the one or the other is that they possess certain qualities, or, rather, that their qualities make certain impressions upon the mind on which they act. And, we have no hesitation in affirming that the impressions made on the human mind, by the qualities of spirit, are as clear, as distinct, as characteristic of the subject to which they belong, as are the impressions made by the qualities of matter. Hence we have the same *kind* of knowledge of the nature of spirit, as we have as to the nature of matter. Spirit has revealed itself, by its qualities, as intellectual and moral and as having a capability of acting upon matter. This is, perhaps, the sum of what we know in regard to spirit; and this we *do* know as certainly as we can know that matter has weight, extension, figure, indefinite divisibility, and the *vis inertiae*, which places it within the control of spirit. God, then, is an *intellectual* and moral Being, and has power, according to the measure of His intelligence, to control matter. We say nothing *now* of that measure — suffice it that, according to it, whether great or small, He can render matter subservient to his intelligent and moral purpose. We cannot conceive of spirit as a *compound*. It revolts our understanding to think of it as an aggregation of particles. By the constitution of our minds, and by what we know of spirit, we are compelled to consider it homogeneous — simple; and,

therefore, as having no need of nutrition, in order to continuance of existence, and as not being liable to waste and dissolution, from time, activity or privation. In fact, we can conceive of the destruction of spirit by no other process than annihilation, and, this, only as within the power of the Being who caused its existence. The unoriginated, purely spiritual Divinity must then be indestructible — emphatically and *essentially* the LIVING God.

Spirit, though a substantial existence, is so subtle that matter can be no hinderance to its presence, nor obstruction to its movement. It pervades, with equal facility, the most solid forms of matter and the atmosphere ; as the poet has beautifully sung:

“Walls within walls no more its passage bar
Than unopposing space of liquid air.”

Spirit needs not the light of the sun, in order to see, nor the vibration of the atmosphere, for the purpose of hearing : “All eye, all ear, all sense,” and shedding the light of its own effulgence on all the objects within the range of its operation, it apprehends all with which it is present, though involved in the deepest darkness, or shut up in the silence of unuttered thought.

Though we are unable by means of our gross, material senses, to detect the presence of purely spiritual beings, or to enter into intercourse with them, yet, it cannot be doubted that such beings do recognize each others presence, and hold familiar intercourse with one another ; seeing that, in the case of mankind, spirits, though embarrassed by an inextricable connection with matter, are able to recognize the presence of one another and to hold important, though imperfect communion with each other.

By what means pure spirits are able to do these things, we do not—cannot know. It is probable, however, that thought, to pure spirit, is as palpable as is figure or sound to our senses? At least, this is certain with regard to the “Father of spirits,” “He understandeth the thought afar off.” To him “The night shineth as the day — the darkness and the light are both alike unto Him.” Thus much we are able to say with confidence, concerning the essential nature of God. But ah! “How little a portion is heard of Him!” or, “who, by searching, can find out God, the Almighty to perfection! *It is* higher than heaven: what can we do? deeper than hell: what can we know?” We shall now, finally, attempt an exhibition of,

IV The *perfections* or attributes of God ; and,

1, God is *eternal*. Unoriginated, He is without beginning. Indestructible, He is without end. But, more, we apprehend, is to be understood, by the eternity of God, than that He is without beginning or that He will have no end, or than both these facts together. He characterizes Himself as “The high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity.” This seems to us to indicate that He essentially and constantly pervades *all duration*: that, with Him, there is neither *past* nor *future* — nothing like progressive existence — no succession of duration, as with His creatures; but a *perpetual INSTANT* — an *eternal NOW*. Creatures *inhabit* only the *present moment*. The *past* is gone from them — the *future* is to come — the *present only* is occupied by them. Hence, if God INHABIT eternity, He fills it completely as they fill the *present moment*. If this were not the case, “One day with him,” would not be “as a thousand years,” nor “a thousand years as one day.”

A knowledge of *this* mode of existence, exclusively belonging to God, will enable us to conceive how, without either *decreeing* or working out *the end*, He is able to *see it, from the beginning*. We do not think it at all strange that we can know the events that are passing before our eyes ; and, we never dream that those events are, in any way, dependent on our knowledge for their existence ; or, that such of them, as are the voluntary acts of accountable beings, are any the less entitled to approbation or censure, from the mere fact that we know them. Now, if God, bear the same relation to eternity that we do to the present moment — that is, if He be present with eternity as we are with the present moment, is it strange that He knows what, *to us*, is future ; or that the voluntary actions of men, which he thus knows, are just as free and uncontrolled as they would be, if He did not know them ? An act which is contingent in its nature is not rendered otherwise by the certainty with which it is known, whether by the Deity or by other intelligent beings. It is, strictly speaking, as contingent an action, after its performance, as before ; because, *contingency* is predicated of the freedom of an action from control, pending its performance, and not of its being a future action, still capable of being or not being performed. Hence, the *certain knowledge* of the performance of a contingent action, whether so known by man, at the time of its performance, or, by the prescient Divinity, ages before its performance, does not destroy its contingency. Our difficulty, in conceiving of a mode of existence so utterly different from our own, as that which is implied in the *inhabiting of eternity*, lies at the foundation of all our difficulties, in regard to what, in Theology, is expressed by the *foreknowledge of God*. Just admit

that God knows the *future* in the same manner as we know the *present*; and that he is determined not to nullify the freedom of his accountable creatures, and there will be as few difficulties in the question of foreknowledge, as in any question involving the mystery of the Divine existence and character. In thus making Himself known, what a stupendous idea of Himself has God revealed to His creatures! How utterly nothing and vanity are we in His sight! And, should we not tremble in his presence, and adore Him with awe and reverence?

2. God is *everywhere present*. As He inhabits eternity, so He pervades universal space. Could we imagine any part of space unoccupied by His presence, we must “limit the Holy One of Israel,” which we may not do. He, Himself, asks, in a manner which is equivalent to a declaration of the fact—“Do not I fill heaven and earth?” And, the Psalmist’s highly poetical and sublime address to the Deity is as true as it is magnificent—“If I ascend into heaven, Thou art there. If I make my bed in hell, behold! Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me.” And, indeed, should He be a moment absent from any part of the universe, He could not perform what is ascribed to Him, by both the Holy Scriptures and sound philosophy—*viz*: He could not support and govern all that He has made. We could have no rational confidence in the stability of the laws of nature, or in the wisdom of Divine providence, could we believe that the Divinity could, for a single moment, be withdrawn from any part of His infinite dominions. For, we cannot persuade ourselves that there is anything in

dead matter capable of performing the various functions, which we call the laws of nature, without the constant impulse of intellectual energy. And, unless all the circumstances, which enter into the scheme of Divine providence, be predicated of an intimate knowledge of the complex affairs they are to regulate, they may be inappropriate or even pernicious. And how can this perfect knowledge exist without universal presence?

Let it be remembered that God is a purely *spiritual* Being; and that spirit is essentially *intellectual*. A spirit cannot be present with aught, of either mind or matter, without possessing a knowledge of it, coextensive with the intimacy with which it is thus present. As, then, God is a spirit, and is present *everywhere*—as He reaches up to the highest elevation of thought, and down to the lowest depths of being—as He compasses the vastitude of the universe, and penetrates to the minutest particles of matter, and to the very inception of thought, He must be intelligently conversant with all that is in the whole universe. Nothing can be too vast for His comprehension—too minute for His observation, or too complicated for His understanding. He not only surveys, with a single glance, the whole wide field of being, and traces the indefinitely various relations of all its parts to each other and to their great whole, but also marks, with minute inspection, the smallest atom of matter, and the slightest mental movement. Hence, all things, throughout the whole universe are, and, in the nature of things, must be fully and accurately understood by Him. He sees every aspect, bearing and relation of every fact, whether great or small, whether physical or spiritual; and, consequently, He adequately understands every such fact. To Him,

every existing fact, no matter how complex its nature, is as axiomatic as that *the whole is greater than any one of its parts* is to us. How deeply interesting this view of the Divine character! How well calculated to alarm the fears of the guilty! How consoling to those who, conscious of innocence, are the objects of scorn or loathing to their fellow-men; or who feel themselves to be hedged about with difficulties and dangers from which they can perceive no way of escape! “Thou God seest me!” is a stronger restraint upon vice than any array of public opinion can be; for public opinion may be eluded — the vilest sinner may hide his transgressions from every human eye. But, though he may “dig deep, to hide his counsel from the Lord”— though he should “cover himself with darkness and with the shadow of death,” yet is the eye of God upon him. “He knoweth the way,” which the sinner takes—“He understandeth his thought afar off.” And with the assurance of this great truth, the upright in heart will be sustained and emboldened, under difficulties, perplexities and calumnies, which, but for this, would confound and overwhelm him utterly. How consoling and encouraging to the righteous, in his afflictions, to know that his Divine Guardian and Protector knows all that has befallen or will befall him; and that he knows equally “how to deliver the godly out of temptations,” troubles and calumnies!

3. God is almighty. What *can* be done, He can do. “Is anything too hard for the Lord?” is an interrogatory, which carries in it the full force of an emphatic affirmation, that nothing *possible* is too hard for Him. We have above ascribed to *spirit* a power to control matter — to render it subservient to intelligence, according to the measure of such intelligence. We have attempted to show, that the

intelligence of God is both perfect in kind, and univerſal in extent. It follows, then, that His power must embrace all *possibility*. Intimately acquainted with all the laws of nature, He can as readily employ them all, in the accomplishment of His purposes, as Watt, or Fulton, or Morse could the few laws of nature, by the control of which, they have so greatly benefited their species, and acquired so much reputation to themselves. Nay, the readiness of God, in subjugating all the laws of nature to His purposes, is incomparably greater than that of these distinguished philosophers and mechanics; because his knowledge of these is incomparably more perfect than was theirs of the particular laws, by means of which they accomplished their wonderful achievements. We go farther, and affirm that, not only is His knowledge of the laws of nature incomparably intimate — nay, absolutely perfect, both in kind and degree, but that those laws are really nothing else than the exertion of his own energy in a uniform direction. Material nature, of which the *vis inertiae* is a recognized quality, has surely no capability of being the subject of law, properly speaking — it can move and operate only as it is impelled by a force external to itself. In other words, its operations must be the result of impulse from spiritual agency; and, where these operations are uniformly in the same direction, that direction, having the appearance of a rule of action, receives the appellation of a law of nature. It is, however, properly *the will* of the spiritual Agent, whose impulse produces such uniform operation. This spiritual Agent, operating uniformly, so far as we can judge, throughout all nature, in the ordinary government of the physical universe, is God; and it is the will of God, displayed in this government, to which

we have given the title — *the laws of Nature*. And, if this be so, who can question that all of power, that belongs to the operation of the laws of nature, is in the hands of God, or, more properly speaking, is directly the power of God? And how stupendous is this power! We tremble with inexpressible terror, when brought into near proximity with some of the operations of physical laws. The rage of the unbridled hurricane, as it uproots venerable forests, demolishes strong-built cities, and whelms gallant navies in watery ruin — the dashing of ocean's wave, when lashed into fury by the rage of the tempest — the eruption of the volcano, when it pours out rivers of lava, to deluge vast regions in fiery destruction — not to speak of the more familiar, yet terrible operations of those laws, which often meet us in the common walks of life; as the fierce rush of the consuming flame, when a city, or even a single human habitation, ship or steamer, freighted with life, is involved in the embrace of a destructive conflagration; or the mysterious pestilence, as it “walketh in darkness,” carrying dismay and death among the affrighted population of a stricken region. These are operations of nature's laws, directed by the circumstances in which they are performed. And, what terrible might do we see in them!

Nor are the laws of nature without beneficent, any more than without terrible energy. It is by means of them, that “the moon” knoweth “her seasons, and the sun” is regulated in “his going down.” It is through their instrumentality, that “seed time and harvest, summer and winter, day and night” do not come to an end. The beneficial character of these vicissitudes is too well known to require that it should be insisted on. Agriculture,

commerce and the useful arts are all dependent, for their success, on the influence of these laws. And to them we are indebted for every comfort and pleasure, that is a constituent in the enjoyment of life. The sight of the eye, the hearing of the ear, the sensations of taste and feeling, and the enjoyment of delightful odors all come to us through their ministration. The continuance of life, as well as the enjoyment of life, depends on the ministry of these laws. All the power of these laws resides in the great Operator; and, therefore, all the advantages, resulting from them, flow from Him, as their proper source. We feel how important is the might of these laws, when "the heaven is as brass, and the earth as iron;" when the clouds withhold the genial showers, and when "the ground is chapt," by the influence of drought; when disease baffles the skill of the physician, and resists the efficacy of well proved medicine; when the jarring elements threaten destruction in their turmoil, or effect it in their fury.

But, mighty as God is, in wielding the laws of nature, we claim for Him a power above and beyond those laws. If they be nothing else but the exertion of His own energy, in the uniform direction, is there aught to hinder Him, when He shall see occasion to do so, from acting independently of, or even in opposition to them? This He does, whenever He performs a *miracle*, properly so called. When He held the waters of the Red sea immovably suspended in air, "to make a way for his ransomed to pass through;"—when He made water to gush from the rock of flint, on the mere stroke of a rod, that He might give drink to His people—His chosen;—when He arrested the sun and the moon, in their appointed course, and held them back from their goal for a whole-

day, that He might afford time for His militant hosts to vanquish their idolatrous and implacable enemies ;— when He surrounded his servants, who, for their fidelity to Him, had been cast into the midst of the burning, fiery furnace, heated to unwonted intensity, with His protection, and so shielded them that “the smell of fire had not passed upon them ;”— when He gave the buoyancy of cork to iron, causing it to swim in the Jordan ;— and when, after curing many diseases, various, most malignant and otherwise incurable, by a word or touch, He called back the dead of many days, “from that bourne, whence no traveler returns,” unless so called back by the only life-giving voice. When He did any one of all these “mighty works,” He showed, beyond all question, that He had power, not only independent of, but over and against what we call the laws of nature — viz., over and against the uniform order in which He usually governs the universe.

There is another view of the power of God, the omission of which would leave our discussion of the present proposition radically defective. God has power, as well over the spiritual as over the physical universe. His mode of governing the former is different from His mode of governing the latter. This difference is in accommodation to the different natures which are to be governed. The dominion is, however, equally absolute in both cases. Spirit is essentially capable of moral character; and dependent spirits are evidently intended for responsibility. To govern spirits, therefore, by arbitrary power, as the physical world is governed, would be to outrage their moral natures, and to defeat the purpose of their responsibility ; for it is a plain — an invincible dictate of reason and common sense, that an *enforced* action can have no moral character ; and that

there can be no responsibility for doing what is inevitably necessary. Hence, the power of God, over spiritual beings, is not usually displayed in compelling them to act in a prescribed manner, as it is always displayed in the case of matter; but it is exerted in visiting upon those beings the consequences of their self-determined course of life and action. Or, if, as probably is sometimes the case, their action is controlled by Divine power, we feel warranted in affirming that, in such cases, responsibility does not attach to the acts so controlled. God may exercise influence on a spiritual being, — He may excite attention, induce conviction, present motive and impart help, without imposing any necessity of acting in the manner indicated, and, consequently, in perfect consistency with the responsibility of the actor. He does all this, and must do all this, that man may be saved; but still, man may, —Alas! how many do! — “reject the counsel of God against themselves — grieve and quench the Holy Spirit,” and so “count themselves unworthy of eternal life.” But when a spiritual being — a responsible dependent creature, shall have chosen his way, whether good or bad, God *will* show His sovereign power, by securing to him the proper reward of his action. He will lead the feeblest and least confident of his faithful followers, through whatever hardships, difficulties or dangers may lie in their way, to victory and glory — to rest and blessedness: while those who are rebellious against His authority, no matter how proud or how mighty, shall be overthrown and covered with the infamy due to their iniquity. “Angels, who kept not their first estate,” are, in the sacred Book, “set forth as examples — reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.”

From all this, it appears that God is, indeed, ALMIGHTY. He can clothe Himself in all the powers that belong to nature ; or, more properly speaking, those powers are but the energies of His own will :—He can suspend or withdraw any or all of those powers of. nature at His pleasure :— He can, when He sees proper, control the might of all ranks of spiritual beings, from the feeblest inhabitant of earth, to the most potent archangel in heaven ;—and He can, and assuredly will hold all of them, who are responsible beings, to strict accountability, for the manner in which they have employed the powers with which he endued them, and award to each of them the recompense they have severally deserved. In short, He doeth according to His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth — none can stay His hand, or, (without the grossest folly,) say unto him, “what doest Thou ?”

We have, hitherto, considered only what are called the *natural* perfections of the Deity ; and, should we proceed no farther, how formidable would be the character of Him so presented to us ! An unoriginated, independent and unchangeable spirit; eternal and unconfined in His presence ; comprehending, in His knowledge, all that is past, present and future to us, and possessing almighty power— how terrible is such a Being ? What heart can brook the contemplation ? Who can feel secure, within the scope of such an influence as may be exerted upon us by such a Being ? Alas for us, if these tremendous capabilities be not directed in their operation by conservative moral qualities, co-extensive in their influence and as absolutely perfect as they ! Blessed be God, that on this point, there

is no room for doubt — the word of God having afforded us the most satisfactory information, that,

4. God is *holy*. Absolute holiness — such as belongs to God — consists in the perfection of moral nature. It is equally opposed to the excess of any one moral quality over the rest, as to the defective state of any of those qualities. It is also an absolute negation of all vicious tendency, of all evil bias. Hence, the sacrifice of goodness to the advancement of the interests of justice, or a disregard of the claims of justice to satisfy the yearnings of goodness, would be inconsistent with holiness, not less than direct injustice or cruelty. Holiness is utterly inconsistent with the sacrifice of truth, for the sake of expediency, or to accommodate the caprices of passion. Holiness is moral purity. Not only are wicked actions and wicked purposes incongruous to it, but even wicked inclinations and tendencies, no matter how feeble, nor how steadily, resolutely or successfully resisted, are incompatible with absolute holiness — such as that which the sacred Scriptures ascribe to God. That this holiness belongs to God, would seem to be, in the highest degree, probable, when it is considered that His existence, His action and His enjoyment are wholly independent of every other being in existence. What bias to evil can be supposed to exist in such a nature as His? What motive could be presented, which would incline such a being as He is, in the slightest degree, from the exactest rectitude? Surely none can be imagined! But not to insist on the reasonableness of the proposition further, our present purpose will be amply accomplished, by showing that the holy Scriptures ascribe holiness to God, as the sum of His moral character. It would seem almost needless to cite particu-

lar passages, from Holy Writ, to this effect; as, in every part of the sacred volume, such passages abound, in vastly varied forms of expression, and with intensively emphatic signification. Under the Law, the requirement, on the peculiar people of God, to be *holy*, is enforced, as by the most powerful of all inducements, by the fact of the holiness of God—"Be ye holy; for I, the Lord your God am holy." When the profane curiosity of the harvest-men of Beth-shemesh, who looked into the Ark of the Covenant, just then miraculously recovered from the Philistines, had been severely punished by the death of many persons, the survivors, penetrated with awe and terror, exclaimed, "Who is able to stand before this holy Lord God?" Among the attributes of God, so sublimely celebrated, by the sweet Psalmist of Israel, none has more prominence, none excites more poetical ardor or more fervent piety, in his enraptured bosom, than holiness—the holiness of God. He considers the holiness of God a sufficient reason for honoring and worshiping Him—"Exalt the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for He *is* holy." "Let them praise Thy great and terrible name; *for it is* holy." He also deems the holiness of God matter of thanksgiving to His people—"Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness."

Holiness is ascribed to God not only by saints under the Law, but, Christians, under the clearer light of the Gospel, reiterate the same representation, in various and emphatic forms of expression—"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father, which is in heaven, is perfect." *Moral perfection* and *absolute holiness* are *identical*. In the model prayer, taught by the Saviour to His disciples,

the holiness of God is directed to be distinctly recognized : “Our Father, which art in heaven! Hallowed be thy name!” Christians are urged by St. Peter, to be holy, because God is holy — “As He, which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy.” Finally, the celestial spirits, which dwell in the presence of God, are incessant in proclaiming the holiness of God. As heard by Isaiah and St. John, these blessed spirits occupy themselves perpetually in crying to one another, “Holy, holy, holy *is* the Lord of hosts!” — “Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty!” Thus is the holiness of God witnessed and celebrated by saints of both the Levitical and the Christian dispensations, and by the blessed in heaven. And surely, a matter, so reasonable in itself, and attested by so many and such unexceptionable witnesses, deserves to be universally and implicitly credited by all rational beings.

5. God is a God *of truth*. One of the sacred writers solemnly affirms that it is “impossible for God to lie;” and, so well established does he esteem this fact, that he considers it a sufficient warrant for “strong consolation,” to those, who, fleeing from the blandishments of a deluding world, have laid “hold on the hope set before them.” We shall specify the truthfulness of God in a few particulars : and,

(1.) God is truthful, in the revelation of Himself, which He has made to His creatures, whether by His works or by His word. Men *may* misconstrue that revelation, as they *may* misread any communication made to them, from no matter what source and on any subject. Inattention, haste, prejudice or aversion to the import of the communication, may betray them into error. But, the simple-hearted, earnest and diligent investigator will not

materially err. Indeed, God's representation of Himself is so plain, and has such an air of fitness and probability, that the wonder is how any rational being can question its truth. All, of that revelation, which is level to the capacity of the human mind, compels the acquiescence of all who will be at the pains to understand it, and who do not bring to the investigation of it strong preconceived opinions, or a pride of philosophy, which scorns to receive, as truth, any doctrine which has not been discovered by its own research. Much, that regards the nature and perfections of God, must, in the nature of things, be vastly above the level of the human intellect — much, even of what concerns the meanest of His works, is unquestionably so. But, in all that God has revealed of Himself, when properly understood, there is nothing *contrary* to human reason. That God is everywhere present, for instance, is an inscrutable mystery to the human mind ; and, yet there is nothing in this proposition that revolts the human understanding. So of many other facts, in regard to the Divine existence and character — they may transcend immeasurably the line of our limited comprehension ; but they do not contradict the reason with which we are endued.

(2.) God is truthful, in the revelation which He has made to man of His will, in regard to Himself. By that, we mean that, *what* God has revealed as His will, is *really His will*. There is no mental reservation, in this revelation — no secret will, inconsistent with that revelation and lying back of it, according to which God will regulate His dealings with His creatures. Is there not impiety and even blasphemy in imputing to the Deity a secret and invincible will, opposed to, or inconsistent with what

He has revealed as His will ? What, then, shall we say of that teaching, which represents God as having, in the secret counsels of His own bosom, determined that a large portion of mankind shall not be saved, when, in His revelation, He has declared that He “will have all men to be saved ?” That he does not will that all men shall be *unconditionally* saved, the whole tenor of Divine revelation clearly shows. Indeed, we have good reason to question that He has willed the *unconditional* salvation of one adult individual of the human race ; but, if He has not willed that all men shall have *ample ability* to be saved, then is His revelation illusory and jesuitical, and He is not a God of truth. No man has this ability of nature ; and, hence, if the revelation in question present the truth, it guarantees grace, whereby salvation may be secured. The communication of this grace, *to all men*, is distinctly testified to by St. Paul — “The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men.”

(3.) God is a God of truth, in His revelation of promises to them who obey, and of threatenings to those who disobey Him. These promises and threatenings are made, not to individuals abstractly considered, but to all who sustain the character to which they respectively apply. And, consequently, the wicked man, who is, to-day, threatened with eternal death, may repent, accept the Saviour by faith, and so be justified and changed in heart, and may to-morrow, be a subject of the “great and precious promises” of the Gospel. And, again, those to whom, yesterday, God had promised the certainty of life eternal, having “turned away from their righteousness and committed iniquity,” are to-day objects of the terrible denunciations of death eternal, for their apostasy and

iniquity. And, indeed, all the promises and all the threatenings, having reference to our relation to God and to our retributive destiny, are predicated of the character in which we appear before God, and not of any abstract, or, as it is sometimes designated, sovereign purpose of God towards us *personally*. Were it otherwise, there would be no candor, no sincerity, no truth in the promises or threatenings, which God has revealed to man — no congruity between those promises and threatenings, and the facts, in regard to man's condition and destiny, to which they relate. The threatening that the sinner shall abide under the wrath of God, and eternally die for his sin, will ever be found true to the letter; and yet, he, who is now a sinner, may, by coming to the remedial terms of the Gospel, be released from this intolerable incumbrance, and may escape eternal death: while he, who is promised the light of God's countenance in time, and eternal life hereafter, may, by "making shipwreck of faith and a good conscience," incur the terrible threat of Divine wrath, in this life, and of swift and eternal destruction hereafter. We have many instances, recorded in the sacred Scriptures, of both promises and threatenings, in which no condition was expressed; which, nevertheless, are clearly shown to have been conditional. Such was the promise, to a progenitor of Eli, of the perpetuity of the priesthood in his family: — such the promise to David, of the perpetual regal dignity of his sons; — and such the threatening, against Nineveh, denounced by the ministry of Jonah. These, and many others of like kind, lead us to believe that all the promises of reward, and all the threatenings of punishment, directed to accountable beings, are admonitory, as well as conditional — intended to incite

the good to fidelity, and to lead the sinner to repentance. At all events, both promises and threatenings are true, in the sense in which they were intended, and, we have no doubt, in the sense in which they were calculated to be understood by those to whom they were primarily addressed. Thus much will ever be certain,— *God will be true, though every man should be a liar.*

6. God is *just*. Justice in God, is *equity* or *conformity to that which is right*, towards all upon whom He exerts an influence. In whatever way He operates upon the condition or fate of His creatures, *right* is the *rule* of His operation. Abraham had a correct view of the Divine character, when he confidently remonstrated with God, on the wrong of destroying the righteous with the wicked, and triumphantly closed the remonstrance, with the demonstrative interrogatory — “shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?” We shall consider the justice of God, in His various relations to His creatures, and especially man; and,

(1.) God is just as a Creator. He had an unquestionable right to create all the various classes of creatures, from the archangel, that stands in His presence, to the animalcule, confined to a space so small that it eludes the sharpest sight of man. None of these classes are entitled, in any tone of complaint, to ask of God, “Why hast Thou made us thus?” But, every one must feel that, if he had created any being, or race of beings, sinful, or with a fatal necessity of becoming sinful; or, if He had created any being to suffer pain, or with the inevitable necessity of pursuing a course that would result in pain, He would have perpetrated, towards such beings, the most cruel injustice. He had an undoubted right to create or not

create any of all that He has made ; but, He could, by no possibility, have had a right to create any of them to be the victims of pain and suffering, or the slaves of wicked passions and vicious propensities, which lead directly and certainly to woe. Accordingly, when He had finished the creation of the heavens and the earth, and of all their various tribes of inhabitants, we hear Him pronouncing the whole of His great work " very good." This He could not have done, if sin, and sorrow, and death had been incident to the creatures He had made, either directly, or by the necessary result of the tendencies He had given them, or of the circumstances in which He had placed them. These, then, did not exist in the beautiful, orderly and happy worlds, upon which the Creator pronounced this emphatic eulogium.

(2.) God is just, in His government of His creatures. But, though " justice and judgment are the habitation of His throne ; " yet, " clouds and darkness are round about Him : " so, that it is often not a little difficult for man, imperfect as is his knowledge of all the bearings of many of the cases which come under his observation, to reconcile the Divine administration, in regard to them, with justice. This difficulty, we suppose, arises chiefly from the peculiar situation of the world, in which we witness that administration. Sin has occasioned that peculiarity. The condition of the world must be regarded, in the first place, as *penal*. Evil is in the world, as the punishment—perhaps as the *natural* consequence of sin. In the second place, we must take into account the fact that there is going on in the world, an earnest endeavor for the salvation of the sinner from the consequences of his sins, both moral and penal. Both these circumstances

exert a marked influence upon the character of the Divine administration. Add to this, that the Divine government contemplates future compensation, whether for good or for ill, to all the parties affected by its administration in this world. The chief difficulty, though by no means the only one, in this matter, regards the subjection of unsinning infants, and of the inferior classes of sentient beings, to suffering and death. The latter, though created for the service of man, were endued with capacities for the enjoyment of existence, in endlessly varied measures. But, it would seem that their dependence upon man was such, that he could not render himself unhappy, nor expose himself to death, without involving them in the same evils. On the whole, however, enjoyment predominates in the existence of inferior sentient beings; whether we suppose their existence limited to the present life, or, with many wise and good men, find, in the holy Scriptures, a guarantee of immortality to them, in greatly improved circumstances. Without anxieties in regard to future want, without foresight of impending danger, without guilt or apprehension of punishment in a future state, they graze or gorge, as their appetites determine; and enjoy the good of the present, without setting over against it the evil of days to come; and, on the supposition that this life is their only portion, they have so much more of enjoyment than of suffering here, with no future evil in prospect, that existence is, on the whole, a good, and their liabilities to its sufferings no evidence of injustice on the part of Him, by whom they were placed in such dependence on man, as that they are involved in partial and temporary sufferings by his rebellion against his Creator and Sovereign. But, allowing

that an immortality, of undisturbed enjoyment suited to and commensurate with their capacities, is secured to them, in the ample scope of man's redemption by Jesus Christ, what a blessing is their being to them, notwithstanding the partial and short-lived evils, which their dependence on man entails on them in this life.

The evils to which man himself is subject, were no part of his original allotment. They are the punitive — perhaps the *natural* consequences of his violation of the order established by his Creator. Is it not probable that, in the constitution given to the world by the Creator, it was provided that derangement in moral order should be followed by disorder in the physical condition of the world? Be this as it may, such disorder did follow upon the original transgression of the Divine law. All "the ills that flesh is heir to" flow, as streams, from that poisonous fountain. There is not an anxious care, which harrows up the soul — not a disappointment, which crushes the buoyancy of the spirit — not a sorrow, that bleeds the heart and enervates the mind — not a pang, that thrills the nerves — not one of these, nor the other innumerable evils, which afflict life or bring it to a close, but is a "fruit of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste brought death into the world, and all our woe." This, it may be said, is plainly enough consistent with the justice of the Divine administration, so far as regards the actual transgressors themselves; but, that their posterity should, for their fault, be subject to moral corruption and suffering, and liable to death, are very different matters, and their consistency with the justice of the Divine government is by no means so obvious. But let it be remembered, that the first sinful pair, if permitted at all to propagate a

posterity, must, according to the established laws of nature, propagate *their own kind*, as well with regard to its imperfections and its liabilities, as in regard to its capabilities and its privileges. Either, then, the human race must not be propagated; or, it must partake of the moral disorder, subjection to disease and liability to death, which the first pair had brought upon themselves. The question in equity, therefore, which was to be determined, was, whether an innumerable posterity should be propagated, by the transgressors, subject to moral disorder, and disease, and liable to death, but free from the *legal* consequences of the first transgression, and secured in the privilege of obtaining a renovation of moral nature, a disciplinary training and meetness for, and, at last, the enjoyment of an immortality of blessedness, in the kingdom of God; or, by precluding to them these glorious possibilities, they should be secured from the temporal suffering and temporal death, incident to an actual existence derived from the rebellious pair, by their being withheld from that existence? And who can hesitate to answer in favor of that administration which permitted the propagation of the human race, subject to the inevitable ills of life, but secured in the possibility of attaining to moral rectitude and of securing an eternal inheritance in bliss? With respect to those who die in infaney, there is no contingency in the matter of their salvation. "The free gift has come upon them, unto justification of life," through "the righteousness of one," Jesus Christ; and consequently, as they have not personally forfeited their rights in Christ, their salvation is *certain*. Who can doubt the justice of permitting them thus to come, through brief sufferings, to eternal happiness, rather than

of preventing their short-lived sufferings, by withholding them from actual existence, and, consequently, from eternal felicity? The existence of evil in the lot of man is, therefore, no evidence of injustice in God as our Creator, or our Sovereign. Nay, it is a standing and striking memorial of His rigid adherence to justice; since, though "He is loving to every man," He punishes him for his dereliction from duty. If, however, this dereliction had proceeded from any invincible tendency in the nature of man — any irresistible force in the circumstances surrounding him, or in the motives operating upon him — any controlling power in the sovereign purposes of God, then these evils would argue injustice in the Creator and Sovereign, who gave him this invincible tendency, who placed him in these irresistibly forcible circumstances, exposed him to the operation of these irresistible motives or subjected him to the power of these controlling purposes of God — thus forcing him into transgression — and then punishing him, with these evils, for such transgression. We feel sure that unbiased reason and unsophisticated common-sense will sustain this assertion, and equally sure that it is in accordance with both the letter and the spirit of the sacred Scriptures.

(3.) God was just, in his redemption of man by Jesus Christ. Man, being the creature of God, and, as such, under the most sacred obligations to render to Him devoted obedience, rebelled against Him. For this, the Divine law had a claim upon man, which extended to his entire capacity to suffer, during the whole of his existence. This claim, in order to the justice of the Divine administration, must be fully met by man; unless an equivalent for his so suffering should be offered on his behalf, and

be accepted by the Executive of the law. Such an equivalent could be found alone in the vicarious sufferings and death of Jesus Christ ; who, uniting in Himself the perfect natures of Divinity and humanity, had ample merit to satisfy the claims of the law against man ; as well as power to suffer in conformity to the terms of that claim. Only by the “offering of Himself once, for all” mankind, could the claim of the law upon man be met and justice satisfied if man should escape the penalty incurred by his transgression. This offering of Himself, Jesus Christ did graciously make ; and, as “in Him dwelt all the fullness of the Godhead bodily,” and “as He gave Himself a ransom for” man, there was no injustice in accepting the substitution of His meritorious suffering and death for the eternal suffering of the sinner. The effects of this righteous substitution are that the guilt of the first transgression is expiated, that “God may be just, and the justifier” of actual transgressors, who secure an interest in the atonement made by Jesus Christ, by “believing on Him,” and that such transgressors, polluted though they be, by sin, may be prepared for, and admitted to a participation “with the saints in light,” in the “inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away.”

(4.) God will be just, in the awards of the final judgment—the judgment of the **GREAT DAY**. In this is implied not merely the absence of all intentional wrong and all negligence of right, on the part of the Judge, in making the decisions, on which those awards shall be rendered, but such a knowledge of all the facts, in every case adjudicated, as shall preclude the possibility of error. The capabilities and opportunities of every party judged,

will be exactly appreciated, and no more will be required of any one than he had ability to perform, as well as the means of knowing that it was his duty to perform it. All this is strikingly illustrated by the parable of the *Talents*. Each recipient received talents, or a talent, according to his proper ability ; and all were judged, and rewarded or punished according to the manner in which they had used the gifts bestowed upon them respectively. He whose ability would have been overtaken by two talents, received but one : he who could profitably use only two, received but two ; and he that could manage five to advantage, received five : while the man who received but one talent, was required to account for the use of that one only ; and they, who had respectively received two and five, were required to account for the use, not of one talent merely, but of the number of talents they had each received. Thus will every one's performance be estimated, by the righteous Judge, “ according to that which he hath received, and not according to that which he hath not received.” As there will be a just appreciation of every man's ability and opportunity, so there will be also a perfect knowledge of every act, determining his character, and of every motive by which such action was induced. “ God will reward every man,” not according to his pretensions, but “ according to his works ; ” and among these works, will be reckoned those “ secret things,” which He will bring to light, “ whether they were good, or whether they were evil.”

7. God is *good*. Goodness is a disposition to confer benefits on subjects who are capable of enjoyment. Goodness stands out so prominently, in the revealed character of God, that the English name, by which He is known

signifies THE GOOD BEING; for *such*, in the Anglo-Saxon language, is the import of the word *God*. Let it be carefully remembered, however, that goodness, in the character of the Infinitely Perfect One, is by no means disproportioned to His other perfections. He is not good at the expense of His wisdom, His truth, His justice, or His holiness. This attribute, however, stands out, before the eyes of mankind, more distinctly than His other attributes; because the present is, to them, the season of probation, and not of retribution. But, when this latter season shall arrive, then His other attributes will be manifested, with equal distinctness and prominence. Then will He be seen in His “whole round of rays complete.” But our present concern is with His goodness; and,

(1.) We observe that the goodness of God was gloriously manifested in creation. No selfish motive could have prompted Him in creation. Absolutely independent, infinitely perfect, and therefore, infinitely happy, God could have contemplated no personal advantage, from the creation of any being or variety of beings, no matter what their rank or their character. In the work of creation, then, He must have had in view the condition and fate of the creatures He was about to make. So far as we have been able to discern, inert and unsentient nature, in all its vast capabilities, was designed for the use and enjoyment of the various tribes and ranks of sentient and intellectual beings, with which the world was peopled; and, those sentient and intellectual beings were endowed with capacities for the enjoyment of the accommodation so provided. True: much of evil and discomfort arises from the mal-appropriations, which are often made,

of the means provided for the enjoyment of sentient and intellectual beings; — either in kind or degree, nature is turned aside from the purpose, which it was intended and calculated to accomplish; and every such perversion inevitably leads to more or less discomfort. The key-note of universal harmony, which primarily prevailed, was lost, when the moral order, established by the Creator, was broken up by the rebellion of man. Still there are frequently heard *tones* and even *symphonies*, from chords not wholly broken, which indicate how unutterably delightful and harmonious was the music, when the instrument was not yet rendered discordant, by the rude shock of man's transgression. For aught we can tell, the functions of life might have been as healthfully and as vigorously performed, as they now are, if every such function were attended by a pang as severe as ever neuralgia inflicted. On the contrary, as a general rule, which indicates the original constitution of animal nature, these functions afford so much pleasure, that, so far as they are voluntarily performed, we are apt to lose sight of the end contemplated, in the process itself. We rarely think of the necessity of nutrition, to the preservation of life, in making provision for that object, or in the regularity and punctuality with which we use that provision — the pleasure we find in the process, is motive sufficient to secure that punctuality and regularity. How much goodness is seen, in an arrangement which thus combines the safety and the enjoyment of animal life. Again: *light* and *sound* are vastly important to the purposes of life. Could not the Creator, if He had so pleased, have so spread the landscape around us, and so filled up the firmament above us, that every prospect would have been a vision of horror,

and every sensation excited by it an agony ? Yet, with what beauty, with what grandeur and with what sublimity has He filled up the circle of our vision, that they might minister to the pleasure of His creatures ! Could he not have caused the vibrations of the air to give forth only sounds of discord : so that the sighing of the breeze should have been as the shriek of anguish; the rustle of the forest-leaf, as the grating of unpolished hinges; and the human voice in its most endearing accents, as a mistuned instrument, — braying horrible discord ? How different the reality ! Sounds and sights there are, it is admitted, calculated to excite disquiet, disgust, and loathing, and to harrow up the soul of the hearer and beholder; but they are *exceptions* — rare exceptions to the *rule*, which matches to the senses of hearing and sight, sounds and objects which minister pleasure. Like observations would hold good, in regard to all our various relations to the order of things, established in the world, which has been assigned to animal existence. But we may not farther expatiate in the vast field that is here spread out before us. Suffice it to say, that, notwithstanding the many and great calamities, which man's rebellion has brought upon the world, of which the Creator constituted him the head, there is in the main such an adaptation of means to the various capacities of sentient and intellectual beings for enjoyment, that we still have ample evidence of the goodness of God in creation.

(2.) God was good in the redemption of man by Jesus Christ. Goodness, in this manifestation, takes the form of *mercy* ; as it contemplates the alleviation of distress, in the case of a sufferer who merits no kindness. Mercy is but a modification of goodness, and could never have been exer-

cised, if sin and sorrow had not furnished an occasion for its exhibition. The condition of man, as a consequence of his sin, was such that he could neither extricate himself nor be delivered by any other creature-interposition, from guilt, from misery and from eternal ruin. But, God was so good to him—"so loved him," that He gave His only begotten Son, "that he might die, the Just for the unjust;" and, in so dying, that He might "bear the sins" of mankind, "in His own body upon the tree," and thus "put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." Thus was the original guilt of man expiated; while provision was made for the propagation, renovation, and eternal salvation of the human race. This, all things considered, is an exhibition of the Divine goodness, altogether unparalleled, and which could not have been imagined even possible, had it not been revealed, as a most glorious reality. For this, every child of man should devote himself to the service of God. Gratitude should impel them all to "glorify God in their bodies and in their spirits which are His."

(3.) God is good, in carrying into effect the plan of human salvation, provided for in the redemption by Jesus Christ. In doing this, He has restrained himself to no particular mode of operation, as some would have us believe. Though His most indulgent plan is that upon which He operates by means of His written word, His preached gospel and His instituted ordinances, in subordination to the influences of His Holy Spirit; yet, in the absence of these *means*, He can and does "bring men out of darkness, into his marvelous light, and from the power of Satan unto God;" so that "in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him." We shall, however, confine ourselves to that mode

of operation, in which, as prevailing among us, we are specially concerned; and we remark that his goodness, in this mode of operation, is evinced in the clear, all-embracing information, concerning what belongs to our eternal salvation, which He has furnished to us in the Holy Scriptures; in the honest and startling warnings, which are employed therein, to arouse and alarm the careless in sin, and to check the headlong and reckless in their pernicious ways; in the encouraging promises, by which penitent seekers of salvation are sustained in their weakness, emboldened in their apprehension, rendered confident in their despondency, and comforted in their godly sorrow—by which the tempted are assured of succor and deliverance, and by which the dying are enabled to triumph in the last conflict. In the peculiar efficiency of this sacred word, when it is preached, in “power and demonstration of the Spirit” by men of like passions with ourselves—when, coming warm from the believing, loving heart of a preacher, called, qualified and sent of God, this “word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” In the impulse, aid, encouragement and consolation, resulting from attendance on the simple, but impressive ordinances of Divine appointment; and, especially, in the timely, impressive and efficient influences of the Holy Ghost; which, if yielded to will result in the enlightenment of the understanding, the quickening and purification of the conscience, faith in Christ, justification before God, the renovation of the heart, the sanctification of the Spirit, perseverance to the end, and eternal life. In every stage, in the process of

our salvation, the goodness of God is seen, in “His patience, forbearance and long-suffering”—in His continuing to operate for the salvation of man, while His word is unheeded, His ordinances neglected and His Spirit grieved; or, while there is so much of hesitation, of defalcation and back-sliding as would discourage any other kindness and exhaust any other patience than those of Him, whose “merciful kindness” towards us is great, and who pitieith us, as a father pitieith his children.

(4.) Finally, the goodness of God will be abundantly manifested, in the ample provision He has made, for the eternal felicity of His servants, in their future state of existence. To prepare them fully for that felicity, their bodies, long the prisoners of the grave, shall be raised to immortality, and reunited to their spirits; and then, “an abundant entrance shall be ministered unto them, into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.” Of the felicity there to be enjoyed, we can say but little; but we are authorized by the “sure word of prophecy” to affirm,

(1.) That there will be no evil there. There Solomon’s boast will be fully borne out. “There will be no adversary nor evil occurrent.” “The wicked shall cease from troubling.” “All tears are wiped from the eyes” of those, who have been “taken away from the evil to come.” “They shall hunger no more; neither shall they thirst any more.” By them,

“Sickness and sorrow, pain and death,
Are felt and feared no more.”

(2.) Those admitted to that glorious inheritance, shall be associated, in the enjoyment of it, with all the good of all ages, of all nations and, probably, of all worlds.

Patriarchs, prophets, apostles, martyrs, confessors and saints, who have glorified the Saviour on the earth, shall “meet together with the Lord ; and, before His presence, shall “shine as stars, and as the firmament forever and ever,” and those who have once entered into this delightful association shall never “go out.” Neither alienation of friendship, nor removal to distant regions, nor death shall ever break the social circle of the saved in heaven, nor mar the happiness of their intercourse.

(3.) Besides and above all, they shall be in the presence of God—the Triune God, their Creator, their Redeemer, their Sanctifier and, in all, their bounteous Benefactor. In His presence, in the light of His countenance and in the rapt contemplation of his infinite perfections, more than in all else, will they find unutterable, uncloying, eternal felicity. The Saviour’s crowning kindness to His disciples was an assurance to them that, “in his Father’s house were many mansions”—that He was going to “prepare a place for them”—that “He would come again, and receive them to himself,” and that, “where He was, there they, His servants, should be also.” This various and ample provision, for the future and eternal happiness of His faithful servants, is an overwhelming instance of the goodness of God. And, with this, we close our feeble endeavor to bring before you the existence, the nature and the character of God—praying earnestly that, in “knowing Him, and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent,” we all may have “eternal life !” Amen!

DISCOURSE III.

TRINITY IN UNITY IN THE GODHEAD.

"There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one."—1 John v, 7.

We are aware that the *genuineness* of this verse has been seriously questioned, not only by opposers of the doctrine which it is generally understood to support, but also by some of the firmest advocates of that doctrine — among the rest, by Dr. A. Clarke, who fairly gives it up, as indefensible. On the other hand, many critics of great learning and ability, hold that its genuineness is sufficiently established. It becomes us to be very modest, in expressing an opinion, in a matter in dispute among men of such vast learning and research; but, we must say that, to us, the arguments *for*, appear to outweigh those *against*, the genuineness of this verse.

Nevertheless, as the opposition to its genuineness is most respectable, we could not venture the support of an important doctrine upon its authority. Hence, in selecting this verse for our text, we have not done so because we regard it as establishing the doctrine we intend to maintain, but only because it brings this doctrine, which is taught with equal clearness, though not with equal compactness, in other and undisputed portions of the sacred Scriptures, within the compass of a few words. Indeed, we consider the doctrine, of the *Trinity in Unity*, in no degree *dependent* on this verse, for the authority of its claims on our acceptance of it — it being amply established by very

many portions of Scripture, to the genuineness of which no exception has been taken by even the most determined in their hostility to the doctrine in question.

We shall proceed to state simply what we understand to be the import of the doctrines of our text. And we understand,

I. That the Persons, called in the New Testament, The Father, the Son, or the Word, and the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, are distinct Persons :

II. That each of these Persons, considered distributively, is very and true God :

III. That there is but one true and living God ; and,

IV. That these three Persons bear unanimous testimony to salvation by Christ.

Were we required to answer the question, “ How can these things be ? ” or to give the *rationale* of this mode of existence, we should have to plead utter incapacity for the task. We could as easily explain that other important truth in regard to the Divine existence—That He exists without any producing cause ! But, though we may not explore the manner of this existence, so as to understand *how it is*, *what it is*, we may, as we think, presume to say that the *Trinity*, of the Divine nature, is not predicated of the same aspect of that nature of which the *Unity* is predicated. In other words, God is not *One*, in the same respect in which He is *Three*. The doctrine, of the Trinity in Unity, if it be, as we believe it is, a glorious truth, is purely a doctrine of Revelation. It has no proper type in nature. It cannot be reasoned out, by philosophy, from any data found in the whole of creation. To Revelation, then, and to Revelation alone, we look for the support of this doctrine. Supported by that, we shall hold it to be worthy

of all acceptance, and shall calmly disregard the reasonings of “philosophy falsely so called:” which, deriving its premises from incompetent and irrelevant sources, concludes against this doctrine, as not answerable to its psychological systems of law, order, or fitness. Against a clear dictum of Revelation, we hold all human wisdom to be puling folly — all reasoning to be false, either in its premises, its conduct of the argument, or its conclusion.

By Revelation, we shall now attempt the proof of our first proposition: viz.—

I. *That the Persons, called, in the New Testament, the FATHER, the SON, or the WORD, AND the HOLY GHOST, or the HOLY SPIRIT, are distinct Persons; and,*

1. The first Scripture we shall adduce, in support of this proposition, is *Matt.* iii, 16, 17: “And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water; and lo! the heavens were opened unto Him; and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon Him; and lo! a voice from heaven, saying, ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.’” Here we have three persons, clearly distinguished one from another, existing at the same time — Jesus Christ, declared, by a voice from heaven, to be the beloved Son of the celestial Speaker: — the Spirit of God, who, descending from the opened heavens, in the likeness of a dove, alighted upon Jesus; and the heavenly Speaker, who, by claiming Jesus for His Son, announces Himself as the Father. The most licentious criticism cannot, by any possibility, invent a plausible interpretation of this passage which does not recognize the distinct personality of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. They act, and act upon each other, as distinctly as three independent *beings* could do; and,

though we do not consider this a proof of distinct *essence*, it certainly does conclusively prove distinct personality, if any thing can prove such personality in any case.

2. Our second proof is found in the ordinance of Baptism, *Matt. xxviii, 19*: “Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Could there be a more distinct recognition of personality, on the part of each of these sacred persons, than is in this formula? Can it be supposed that Christians are directed to be baptized into names that merely signify qualities, or into one Being, and two of His attributes or manifestations, while the terms employed clearly indicate personality, and indicate it in regard to the two last equally as to the first? The supposition is absurd. The attributes of a *person* may present strong inducements to affection, devotion or consecration to the person to whom they belong; but certainly it would require madness for any person to consecrate himself, or to submit to be consecrated, to the attributes themselves. If, then, there be any rational signification in the formula of baptism, the three names, in, or into, which the apostles and their successors were directed to baptize their disciples, stand for three Persons, who are the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

4. Our third proof is taken from *John xiv, 26*: “The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” Here, we have the *HOLY GHOST, sent by the FATHER, in the name of the SON*; and, as appears from verse 16, sent in answer to the prayer of the Son. None but a person could hear and answer prayer, or could be the

sender of a messenger or agent, on a mission to a third party:—none but a person could solicit the sending of such a messenger or agent, or could sustain the relation of *principal*, in whose name or behalf such messenger or agent was sent;—and only a *person* could be a *Comforter*, a *remembrancer*, taking the things, belonging to His principal in the transaction, and showing them to the party to which He had been sent. Here, then, we have again the recognition of the *distinct personality* of each of these three Persons—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

4. The fourth proof of our proposition, which we shall bring forward, is the well known *benediction* of St. Paul to the Corinthian Church, found in 2 Cor. xiii, 14, and which has been almost universally adopted, by ministers of the Gospel, as the form in which they pronounce a parting blessing upon their congregations—“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all.” It is true, that the *usual* New Testament *distinctive* denominations are not here given to two of the Persons, whose blessing is invoked; but, then, it is so common throughout the New Testament, to qualify Jesus Christ as *the Son*—*the Son of God*, that, with respect to him, no cavil can be apprehended; and as the Person, so often in the New Testament styled the Father, is, by common consent, admitted to be God, it will, we presume, be disputed by no one that the Father is intended, by the cognate term, God, in this benediction. If the apostle understood the matter, and if he was sincere, in his purpose of leading his disciples in the way of truth, are not three persons recognized distinctly in this benediction? Could these persons have been more accurately discriminated, one from another, or more clearly

qualified, *as persons*, than they are? Would it not be utterly absurd to commend a Church to the *grace* of aught else but a person:— to the *love* of aught else but a person:— to the communion of aught but a person? And would it not be equally absurd, in commanding the Church to the *grace*, *love* and *communion* of one person, under three several manifestations, to discriminate those manifestations in such a manner as to represent them as distinct *personalities*, and that, too, without any, the slightest, intimation that three manifestations of the *same person* were intended? We conclude, then, that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are recognized, as three *distinct Persons*, in this apostolic benediction.

We deem it superfluous to adduce any more proofs of the truth of our first proposition. Were it considered necessary, nothing would be easier than to bring forward a vast amount of clear, pertinent, and weighty evidence in its support. But we are satisfied that enough has been produced, to put the truth of the proposition beyond question, in the mind of any candid and rational inquirer. We shall therefore proceed to show,

II. *That each of these Persons, considered distributively, is VERY AND TRUE GOD.*

1. That the *Person*, who, in the New Testament, is denominated THE FATHER, is *very and true God*, will scarcely be denied by any one, who admits the Divine authority of that New Testament. Still, it may be proper, if not necessary, to collect some of the vast amount of testimony to this point, which is to be found in that sacred volume; and we commence with,

(1.) *John viii, 54: “It is my Father that honoreth me; of whom ye say that He is your God.”* That the Jews,

to whom the Saviour was speaking, claimed the only true and living God, as *their* God, is a matter of such notoriety, as to need no proof; and Jesus affirmed, unequivocally, that He, whom they claimed as *their* God, was His Father — THE FATHER, in the current language of the New Testament. If, then, credit be due to the solemn affirmation of our blessed Saviour, THE FATHER *is very and true* God.

(2.) 1 *Cor.* viii, 6: “To us *there is but* one God, the Father.” Could the true and proper Deity of THE FATHER, be more clearly and emphatically proclaimed than it is in this brief sentence? If He be not *very and true* God, then the apostle, and the whole Christian Church, in whose name He speaks, are utterly “without God in the world,” instead, as they claim, of having a clearer and fuller knowledge of, and a purer devotion to, the true God, than any others have ever had.

(3.) 2 *Cor.* i, 3: “Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort.” That the “Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” is THE FATHER, referred to in the argument, is evident from very many passages of Scripture, especially from the claim of paternity to Jesus Christ, asserted by the voice from heaven, at the close of the Saviour’s baptism. Here, *the Father*, then, is put in *apposition* with God, and is, moreover, declared to be “the Father of mercies” — the source, fountain or origin of all the mercies exercised towards sinful man — “and God of all comfort” — the spring of all joy, the contriver, artificer and giver of all happiness — the perennial fountain of all bliss, in heaven as well as upon earth. He is, then, *very and true* God; for, only of the true God could these things be *truly* affirmed.

(4.) *Gal. i, 1, 3* : “Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God, the Father, who raised Him from the dead,)—Grace *be* to you, and peace from God, the Father.” Thus, within the compass of only three verses, has the apostle *twice* put *the Father* in *apposition* with God; and, he has, also, as evincive of the proper Divinity which he ascribed to Him, invoked *grace* and *peace*, from Him, upon the Galatians, as well as recognized His supreme authority in His own apostleship, and His power over death, in raising up the Lord Jesus Christ from under its dominion. Could anything more satisfactorily establish the claim of **THE FATHER**, to be *very and true God*?

(5.) *Ephes. vi, 23* : “Peace be to the brethren, and love, with faith, from God, the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Here, again, *the Father* and *God*, are put in apposition—both designating the *same person*, which is the effect of apposition. Other similar passages might be cited from the New Testament Scriptures, in great numbers; but those already cited, it is presumed, are amply sufficient to put it beyond controversy, that *true* and *proper* Deity is, in terms and expressly, ascribed to the person, denominated, in the Scriptures of the New Testament, **THE FATHER**.

Besides this *direct* ascription of Divinity to **THE FATHER**, it would be an easy matter to establish His claim, to be *very and true God*, from the requirement, of homage, worship and devotion, made in His behalf of those who are enjoined in the most solemn manner, to render them only to the true God:—from the work of creation, the supervision of providence and the scheme of salvation, which, belonging properly and exclusively to God, are ascribed to

THE FATHER; — and, from the most unequivocal attribute of sovereignty — that of judging and rewarding or punishing all accountable beings, for all their works, as they have been good or bad. This right or attribute of sovereignty does not the less belong to *the Father*, because he has “committed all judgment to *the Son*;” for, we are expressly told that *He will perform* this act of sovereignty by *His Son*. *Acts xvii. 31*: “He hath appointed a day in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained: whereof He hath given assurance unto all *men*, in that He hath raised him from the dead.” From *St. Peter*, *1 Epis. i, 17*, we learn that “THE FATHER, without respect of persons, judgeth according to every man’s work.” On the whole, we consider this first member of our present proposition uncontestedly proved, and conclude, without hesitation or doubt, that *the Person*, denominated, in the New Testament Scriptures, THE FATHER, is *very and true God*. We proceed to prove,

2. That the *Person*, who, in Scripture, is denominated THE SON, or THE WORD, is *very and true God*. We shall, in the main, pursue the same course of argument, in making the proof of this member of the second proposition, as that which was followed in proving the one just disposed of. In the first place, evidence that to the *Person*, called *the Son*, or *the Word*, is directly appropriated the name of *God*, in its *proper, viz.*, its *highest* signification, will be produced. Afterwards, collateral and confirmatory evidence will be, at least, glanced at, if not dwelt on at length.

(1.) Our first evidence, that THE SON, or THE WORD, is very and true God, is found in *Ps. xlvi, 6*, compared with

Heb. i, 8. In the *former place*, it is written, “Thy throne, O, God ! is forever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.” In the *latter place*, “unto the Son, He saith, ‘Thy throne, O, God ! is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom.’” Little comment, on these compared texts, can be necessary—the language is, at once, so explicit and so emphatic, in expressing the *proper* Divinity of the *person*, called the *Son*. But, it may not be amiss to remark that this attestation to that Divinity is in an address of God Himself to the Son. There can be no possible evasion of the force of this evidence, without impugning either the truth of God, or the authority of this Psalm, or of the Epistle to the Hebrews, as a revelation of truth from God. With those, who would do any of these things, we have, *at present*, no controversy. Our argument, *now*, is with only those who concede the authority of Revelation in general, and who subscribe to the dictum—“Let God be true, and,” or though, “every man” should be “a liar,” or in error. Not only is the simple fact, of the Godhead of the Son, expressly declared, but, there is also ascribed to Him an everlasting, and, therefore, undervived throne, or seat of majesty, and a sceptre of righteousness, or a righteousness of government, both as regards his right to govern, and to the exact equity of both the principles and the administration of His government. All which could appertain to the infinitely perfect God alone. More decisive evidence, that the *person*, called THE SON, is *very and true God*, than that here presented, cannot even be imagined.

(2.) Our second proof, that the *person*, called THE SON, is *directly* represented as *very and true God*, is furnished by *Ps. cii*, 24, 25, compared with *Heb.* i, 8, 9, 10. In

the *former place*, we read : “I said, O, God, my God ! take me not away in the midst of my days ! Thy years are throughout all generations. Of old hast thou laid the foundations of the earth ; and the heavens are the work of thy hands.” In the *latter place*, “But, unto the Son, *He saith*, ‘Thy throne, O, God ! is forever and ever : a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of Thy kingdom : Thou hast loved righteousness and hated iniquity ; therefore, God, *even* thy God hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows. And, Thou Lord, in the beginning, hast laid the foundation of the earth ; and the heavens are the work of thy hands.’” Observe, 1st, that the address, in the Psalm from which we have quoted, is affirmed, by the text cited from the Epistle to the Hebrews, to have been made to THE SON ; 2d, that the *person* addressed is denominated *God*—“O, God, my God!”—and 3rd, that to Him are ascribed, in this Psalm, providence and creation, and elsewhere, as cited in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, *eternal* dominion, and both a right to govern and a righteous government : all which belong only to the Supreme Being. By what rule of interpretation or canon of rational criticism, can the conclusion be avoided, that the person, to whom such ascriptions could be appropriately made, is *very and true God* ? Either the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews did not properly represent the meaning of the Psalmist, or the Psalmist was himself in error, or THE SON is God, Creator of the earth and the heavens ; and, eternally, the righteous and rightful Sovereign of the universe. As the two former of these alternative suppositions, are utterly inadmissible, by any one who believes the Scriptures to be the word of the God of truth, the other supposition must be adopted. It

would be difficult to conceive a more clear, direct and incontestable proof, of any position, than is here afforded, that THE SON is *very and true God*.

(3.) Our third evidence, that THE SON is *very and true God*, is taken from Isa. vi, 1-5, compared with John xii, 40, 41. In the *former place*, we find recorded a vision of the Holy One, which overwhelmed the prophet with fear and awe: “I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and His train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphim: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another and said, ‘Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory!’ And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke. Then said I, woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts;” and verse 10: “Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.” In the *latter place*, is a citation from this passage of Isaiah, and a distinct reference of the vision, above described, to THE SON: “He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts, that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw His glory and spake of him.” The connection of the passage shows indubitably that THE SON is the *person* of whom the evangelist is speaking in this place; as will be seen by referring to *verses 34 to 39*. It is true, He is

called *the Son of man*: but, as *the Son of man*, and *Jesus Christ*, are here seen to be *identical*, so, *Jesus Christ*, and *THE SON*, are, in innumerable instances, seen to be *identical* also. It was *THE SON*, then, whom the prophet, in his glorious vision, beheld sitting, in august majesty, upon a sublimely elevated throne — the everlasting seat of His rule supreme. It was to *Him*, that that vast assemblage of spiritual beings, who thronged the temple, rendered homage, devotion and obedience. It was of *Him*, that the seraphim, who stood above the train,— as of superior rank, — cried to one another, in choral chant, “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord*” (JEHOVAH,) “*of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory.*” And could such a vision represent any being inferior to the true God? Nay, the peculiar, incommunicable name of God, JEHOVAH, is expressly given to *Him thrice* — twice by the prophet, and once by the seraphim. Would it be possible to furnish more conclusive proof, of any fact, than is here presented, that *THE SON* is *very and true God* — the JEHOVAH of the Old Testament, the Object of celestial worship and adoration?

(4.) Our fourth evidence, in support of this member of our second proposition, is recorded in John i, 1-4. “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and, without Him, was not any thing made that was made. In Him, was life; and the life was the light of men.*” In remarking on this passage, the first thing that claims our notice is the word, *beginning*. It can be used properly in relation to *time* and *the things of time* only. It cannot, without gross absurdity, be applied to eternity, or to things which are strictly eternal. What, then, is its probable application in

this place? We suppose, from its intimate connection with the account which the evangelist here gives of *creation*, that its application is to *time* itself; as we consider time and creation strictly coexistent. If we are right in our view, then, the evangelist affirms that the Word *was*—was in existence in the beginning of time; and, if so, He does not belong to time, but to eternity. In other words, He is an *unoriginated* Being, having had no beginning, nor any cause of being. This interpretation is confirmed by the guarded, explicit and very emphatic declaration that He was the maker of all things that were made; for, there would be utter absurdity in supposing that He began to be, without being made; and an equal absurdity in supposing He made Himself. When time began, then, the Word was in existence—an unoriginated, independent Being. Again: in the beginning of time, “The Word was with God”—the *fellow companion, associate* of God. This *fellowship* of the Word with God, is placed upon its proper ground—the ground of *equality*—in what follows—In the beginning of time, “The Word was God. The same was, in the beginning, with God.” God with God, is *equal association, congruous fellowship, suitable companionship*. He, who, in the beginning, was God, was the *same* who was with God.

To render his intention, of ascribing *proper* Deity to THE WORD indubitably certain, the evangelist represents him as the Creator of all things that were made. No one, it is presumed, imagines that any other being than God has *creative* power. We have said that the evangelist’s statement of this matter is *guarded, explicit* and *very emphatic*. Hear him: “All things were made by Him, and, without Him was not any thing made that was made.”

However numerous, exalted or powerful the inhabitants of heaven, or the prisoners in the horrible pit—however many or magnificent the worlds or systems of worlds, that revolve in universal space—and, whatever sentient beings occupy those worlds, from the *mite* to the *mastodon*, from the *least apprehensive animal to man*, in all the glory of his intellectual and moral powers—all, all are the creatures of His hand.

Once more: the evangelist says, “In Him was life; and the life was the light of men.” There is much difficulty in this passage; and, we apprehend, commentators generally have missed the true meaning. They understand it as affirming that He was the Giver of life to all who live. We doubt whether any reference to this undoubted truth was had in this place. We venture to suggest the following, as the true meaning of the passage: “In Him was life”—essential, underived, independent life. Men were dead, by the sentence of a violated law of God, and could be redeemed only by the vicarious death of one, who, not only could offer merit equivalent to the claims of the law, but had also both the right to dispose of His own life, and power to resume it, after having, by laying it down, met the claims of the law. This merit, right and power could belong to no creature. Only an unoriginated, independent Being—only God could have them. THE WORD, as God, had life in Himself; and this “life was the *light of men*”—their only hope of salvation. That the life here spoken of has direct, perhaps *exclusive* reference to the gospel scheme of salvation, appears almost certain from what follows: “And, the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” This is lamentably the fact, with respect to the reception which the gospel

meets with generally, amid the moral darkness of a world “lying in the wicked one.”

Reviewing the whole of this inestimable passage, who can doubt that *He*, who in the beginning of time, *existed*, existed *with God*, existed *as God, God with God*—who created all that was created; and, who, having underived, independent life, was, by means of that life, qualified to be the Saviour of sinful, lost mankind—who can doubt that *He* is *very and true God*?

(5.) The last *direct* evidence, which we shall cite, of the *proper* Deity of THE Son, is from *Rom.* ix, 5 : “Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, God, blessed forever. Amen!” This testimony is so direct, so conclusive, so utterly incontestable that the adversaries of the Divinity of Christ have felt themselves compelled to resort to supposititious emendations of the text, in the face of *all* authority of manuscripts and versions, to keep in countenance their determined hostility to the doctrine they oppose. The amendments they propose have not the merit of even congruity to the context, or probability, in their special pleadings. And, indeed, we see no possible evasion of the doctrine of our proposition, admitting the text to be genuine, and of authority in the question. The apostle intimates a *two-fold* nature in Christ—a human nature, derived from the Israelitish stock—the other nature is not directly specified, but is intimated to be the Divine; for, in the text cited, Christ, without discriminating between the specified and intimated natures, combined in His person, is declared to be “over all, God, blessed forever;” and, the inference seems to us irresistible, that He is God, because His human nature is united to the Divine. Most certainly, the union of two

natures, neither of which was Divine, could not, by any possibility, have entitled the compound being, so constituted, to have been regarded as “over all, God, blessed forever.”

We feel warranted in assuming, that a sufficient amount of *direct* testimony to the *proper* Divinity of THE SON, has now been brought forward ; though, did we deem it necessary, we should have no difficulty in adding greatly to it. In connection with this *direct* testimony, we have had frequent occasion to notice, incidentally, collateral evidences in support of the same doctrine. We have seen that the Scriptures claim for THE SON, independent, unoriginated existence—eternal dominion—the creation of all things—and the final judgment and determination of the destiny of all accountable beings. Besides all this, we learn, from the same indisputable authority, that all the hosts of heaven, as well as the inhabitants of the earth, are required, by the Divine mandate, to worship THE SON; and men are required to honor HIm, even as the Father is honored ; which, as men are strictly forbidden to worship any other than the one true and living God, is an irrefragable proof that He is regarded, in the Scriptures, as *very and true God*. Moreover: He claims to be in heaven and upon earth *at the same time*. “No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man, which is in heaven.”—*John* iii, 13. And He promises that His presence shall be with any two or three of His servants, wherever and whenever assembled together: “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.”—*Matt.* xviii, 20. And, as His servants may be assembled *thus* together, in every region of the inhabited parts of the

earth, at the same moment, an extent of presence, far beyond what is possible to man, or, indeed, to any creature, is implied—if absolute ubiquity is not implied, in this promise, as well as in the claim, of being in heaven and on earth at the same time. Universal presence is an attribute universally considered as belonging exclusively to the true God. He is not only independent in existence, and the Giver of life to all that lives; but He will give eternal life—eternal happiness—to all those who obey Him. From all this, we are satisfied that this second member, of our second proposition, is established, beyond all reasonable controversy; and, therefore, affirm, most confidently, that the person, denominated, in the New Testament, *THE SON*, is *very and true God*. And, we now proceed to attempt the establishment of the truth of the remaining member, of this second proposition, viz :

3. *That the person termed in Scripture, the HOLY GHOST, or the HOLY SPIRIT, is very and true God.* In accordance with the plan, heretofore pursued, we shall commence the proof of this point, by adducing *direct* evidence of its truth, from the Holy Scriptures.; and,

(1.) Our first proof of this position, is taken from *2 Tim.* iii, 16 : “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God,” compared with *2 Peter* i, 20, 21 : “No, prophecy of the Scriptures is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not, in old time, by the will of men; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” It would be difficult for any proof to be more clear, more direct or more conclusive than is this, that the *person*, called the HOLY GHOST, is *very and true God*. No discussion can render it plainer—no language could make it more direct or more decisive than it is.

No prophecy of the Scripture is of man, but from the *motion* of the Holy Ghost; and, all Scripture was given by inspiration of God. It is, therefore, perfectly clear and certain that, if these Scriptures are the truth of God, the HOLY GHOST is *very and true God*.

(2.) Our second proof, of the point under consideration, is found in *Acts* v, 3, 4 : "Why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost? Why hast thou conceived this thing in thy heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Here *Holy Ghost* and God evidently stand for the same Divine person. Language could not be more explicit; and therefore, this text clearly proves that the HOLY GHOST is *very and true God*.

(3.) Our third evidence, results from a comparison of *Acts* xxviii, 25-28: "Well spake the Holy Ghost, by Esaias, the prophet, unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people and say, Hearing, ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and, seeing, ye shall see, and shall not perceive; for the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted and I should heal them,"—with *Isa.* vi, 8-10: "I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, 'Here am I, send me;' and He said, 'go and tell this people,' Hear ye, indeed, but understand not; and see ye, indeed, but perceive not.' Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed." In these compared passages, the *person*, who by the apostle is called

the HOLY GHOST, is called, by the prophet, the Lord, or JEHOVAH — the well-known name of God, and *exclusively* applied to the true God. Hence we conclude that the HOLY GHOST is *very and true God*.

(4.) Our fourth proof, of the point now under consideration, will be found in *Heb.* ix, 7, 8: "Into the second went the High Priest alone, once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: the Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest;" compared with *Lev.* xvi, 2 and 29, 30: "And the Lord said unto Moses, 'speak unto Aaron, thy brother that he come not at all times into the holy place within the vail, before the mercy-seat, which is upon the ark, that he die not; for I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat. And this shall be a statute unto you, that, in the seventh month, on the tenth day of the month, ye shall afflict your souls, and do no work at all, whether it be one of your own country or a stranger that sojourneth among you: For, on that day, shall the Priest make an atonement for you, to cleanse you, that ye may be clean from all your sins before the Lord.' " The proof of our position, from these compared passages, must be obvious to every attentive reader of them. The *design* of the entrance of the High Priest, alone, once every year, into the holy place, within the vail, with a sacrifice of atonement, is ascribed, by the author of the epistle to the Hebrews, to the *Holy Ghost*: while we are, in *Leviticus*, expressly informed that the *Lord*, i. e. JEHOVAH, gave direction in the whole matter; so that, He, who, in *Hebrews*, is called the *Holy Ghost*, is the *same person*, who, in *Leviticus*, is called JEHOVAH. The HOLY GHOST, then, is *very and true God*.

(5.) Our fifth evidence, of the *proper* Divinity of the HOLY GHOST, is found in *Heb.* x, 15, 16: "The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for, after that He had said before, 'This is the covenant that I will make with them, after those days, saith the Lord I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them,'"—compared with *Jer.* xxxi, 33: "This *shall be* the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts." There are, in both these passages, two speakers mentioned— one of them gives an account of what the other had said. In the epistle, one of these speakers is called the *Holy Ghost*; the other is called *the Lord*. In the prophecy, *both* are called the Lord, or JEHOVAH. The *person*, then, who, in the epistle, is called the *Holy Ghost*, is, in the prophecy, called JEHOVAH. We have affirmed that He, who, in the epistle, is called the *Holy Ghost*, is in the prophecy, called JEHOVAH: This will be evident from the verses immediately preceding the verse just cited, where it will be found that the person giving an account of the establishment of a new covenant with the house of Israel, by JEHOVAH, is frequently called JEHOVAH. The HOLY GHOST is, therefore, by these passages of sacred Scripture, clearly proved to be *very and true God*.

These *direct* testimonies, to the *proper* Divinity of the Holy Ghost, we deem amply sufficient. Beyond a few concurring witnesses, testimony is but little strengthened by accumulation—"In the mouth of two or three witnesses, shall every word be established." But, though we consider the *direct* testimony, which we have adduced, altogether sufficient, it may not be inexpedient to notice

some collateral and confirmatory evidence on the same point. And, we are informed that the Holy Ghost was employed in the work of Creation: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—*Gen. i, 2.* "By His Spirit He hath garnished the heavens"—*Job xxvi, 13.* Again, the Holy Ghost is, by the whole tenor of the Scripture, represented as dictating prophecy—implying *prescience* in Him—"Prophecy came not, in old time, by the will of man; but, holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost"—*2 Peter i, 21.* Once more: the power to perform miracles, is evidently ascribed, throughout the Acts and the Epistles, to the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon those who were instrumental in those works. This is so notoriously the fact, that it is needless to cite any particular testimony in its support. Finally, the work of grace, whereby man is fitted for the presence of God, and the society of holy creatures, is represented as being performed by the Holy Ghost. He, it is, who quickens, enlightens, draws, renews and sanctifies. He, it is, who guides, protects, succors and comforts. All that is done, in bringing men "from darkness into God's marvelous light, and from the power of Satan unto God:" whatsoever is done, in "building them up in their most holy faith," or in preserving them, "through faith, to salvation"—is performed by Him. Now, creation, prescience and the power to control the laws of nature, and to "create men anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works," belong to God, and *only* to God; and, therefore, we conclude that, in thus representing the Holy Ghost, it was the purpose of the Holy Scriptures to teach us that He is the *true God*. On the whole, we feel warranted in coming decidedly to the conclusion, that the *Holy Ghost* is *very*

and true God. And, we shall, therefore, proceed to the discussion of our third proposition, viz:

III. *That there is but one true and living God.* As this proposition was the subject of discussion, in a former Discourse, it will not, we suppose, be necessary, or even proper, to dwell upon it in this, at any great length. Still, with a view to have the whole subject under the eye at the same time, it is deemed expedient, if not necessary, briefly to consider some of the evidences which go to establish the truth of this proposition. In doing this, we shall select other proofs than those which we have already brought forward; and,

1. We cite *Ps. xviii, 31*: “Who is God, save the Lord?” Every well-informed reader is aware that there can be no more forcible affirmation of any truth, than a triumphant *interrogatory*. The interrogatory we have cited, is of *this* description — its manifest import being a strong affirmation that there “is no God, save the Lord,” or JEHOVAH; which is always the equivalent of Lord, *as here written*.

2. The *name*, under which God revealed Himself to the Israelites, by Moses, clearly expresses the *unity* of the Divine nature. “I AM THAT I AM,” is in the *singular*, and indicates *One alone*. Had there been more than One God, propriety would have required that He should have designated Himself as one of the number, who share Divinity with Him, by some such denomination as the following: “I AM ONE OF THOSE WHO ARE;” but, in the name He has applied to Himself, He lays claim not only to independent, unoriginated existence, but to *such existence exclusively*.

3. *Isaiah xliv, 8, 24*: “Is there a God besides me?

Yea, *there is* no God. I know not *any*. I *am* the Lord, that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself." Language could not express, in clearer or stronger terms, the claim to *exclusive* Godhead, on the part of JEHOVAH. But, not only is the claim, to be *God alone*, *directly* made — it is also inferentially advanced, in the averment that He *only* is the *Maker of all things, who hath* stretched forth the heavens **ALONE**, and *spread abroad the earth* **BY HIMSELF**: for as the power of *Creation* is, on all hands, considered as belonging to God, if JEHOVAH has made all things — if He has stretched forth the heavens *alone*, and spread abroad the earth *by Himself*, He is not only God, but God *alone*; and, therefore, there is **BUT ONE** God.

4. Once more: *Mark* xii, 29: "The Lord, our God, is one Lord;" *compared* with *Deut.* vi, 4: "The Lord, our God is one Lord." The object of the comparison of these scriptures, is to show that the term *Lord*, in *Mark*, is *identical* in signification with the term *Lord*, or JEHOVAH, in *Deuteronomy*. The effect, in both cases, is to establish, in the closest manner, the **UNITY** of the Divine nature; for, as there is no name or title more *exclusively* appropriated to the true God, than JEHOVAH, and as both these scriptures affirm that JEHOVAH, the God of Israel, is **ONE JEHOVAH**, it follows that the true God — the God of the Bible — is **ONE God alone**.

We have now, we are firmly persuaded, clearly and incontestably established the three propositions we undertook to maintain — *That the persons, called, in the New Testament, The Father, the Son, or the Word and the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, are DISTINCT PERSONS; that each*

of these persons, considered distributively, is VERY AND TRUE GOD; and, that there is BUT ONE TRUE AND LIVING GOD. The establishment of *these* propositions, we regard as equivalent to the establishment of the doctrine that there are *three persons in One God* — in other words, the doctrine of the *Trinity in Unity*, in the Divine nature. The argument is briefly this — There is *but ONE TRUE AND LIVING GOD*; but, **THE FATHER, THE SON and THE HOLY GHOST** are **THREE DISTINCT PERSONS**, *and are each, distributively considered, VERY AND TRUE GOD*; Therefore, there are **THREE PERSONS**, in the **ONE TRUE AND LIVING GOD**. We cannot see how this conclusion is to be avoided, if the propositions discussed have been maintained — and we are unable to see any defect in the proof by which they are supported. We, therefore, rest satisfied that the doctrine, *of the Trinity in Unity*, is established, beyond the reach of successful controversy.

This doctrine we hold to be of vast importance. Upon it, it seems to us, rests the whole scheme of man's recovery from the disastrous and ruinous consequences of the original transgression of the Divine law by him. Each person of the Trinity has a definite office, in this great work, ascribed to Him, in the Holy Scriptures. The administrative authority, under the first covenant, is ascribed to **THE FATHER**. He, it is, who is the party offended by the transgression under that covenant; whose office requires that He see that the violated *law be magnified and rendered honorable*; who, nevertheless, *so loved man*, as to provide for his salvation, *by giving His only-begotten Son, to be a propitiation for his sin*, and, who, through the merits of this propitiation, extends pardon to all of the guilty race, who secure a personal interest in

those merits, by complying with the terms on which it is offered. The office of THE SON is that of Mediator — combining in Himself the functions of Priest, Sacrifice, Advocate and Administrator of the government, under the *Second, or New covenant*.— *Offering Himself, the Just for the unjust* — after His resurrection, *ever living, at the right hand of God, to make intercession for man* — and *ruling, in His mediatorial kingdom, as King of saints*. That part of the plan of salvation, which pre-eminently belongs to THE HOLY GHOST, is the influence to be exerted upon man, in order to bring him within the scope of its successful operation. It is by Him that man, *dead in trespasses and in sins*, is inspired with new life. It is by Him that those, who, blind and in darkness, are wandering in utter bewilderment, are enlightened, and guided, *out of darkness, into God's marvelous light*. He *convinces of sin, takes of the things of Christ, and shows them to the penitent sinner*; thus exciting that *faith, which justifies the ungodly, and brings to the conscience of the believer the evidence of pardon, acceptance with God and adoption, as His child and heir*. It is by Him that the believer *is strengthened, with might in the inner man*; so that he is enabled to *fight the good fight of faith — run, with patience, the race set before him, and endure to the end*. It is by the Holy Ghost, moreover, that the *faithful* believer is *sanctified, throughout soul, body and spirit*, and is thus made to be *meet for the inheritance of the saints in light*. Thus, while it is *God who worketh all*, in all that concerns the salvation of man, each of the THREE DIVINE PERSONS has His peculiar department in the stupendous achievement.

We do not consider the *Trinity in Unity* as, *in any way, or in any degree, dependent on the plan of human salvation*.

We conceive it to be the *proper*, the *eternal* nature of the unsearchable Jehovah — but, we do suppose that the *revelation* of this mystery of the Divine nature to man was made with *special*, if not with *exclusive*, reference to that plan. Had there been no necessity for *such* a manifestation of the Divine nature, we deem it at least probable that the mystery of the Trinity in Unity would have been forever treasured up among those “secret things, which belong to the LORD our God;” but, in consequence of a necessity of that kind having arisen out of human transgression, that deep and mysterious manifestation has been made “to us and to our children,” and is now the proper subject of our faith and adoration — not of philosophical speculation upon the nature of the fact thus revealed to us.

Believing the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity, in the Divine nature, to have been fully established, by the arguments we have above presented; and, believing, further, that our text is a *genuine* portion of the Sacred Scriptures, and that it teaches the doctrine we have been defending, we consider ourselves not only entitled but obliged to treat it with such reverence and deference as belong to the *Word of God*. And, hence, we consider it important to ascertain, as far as we are able, the further meaning of our text. It affirms that “There are three that bear record in heaven,” and that “these three are one.” This involves our remaining position, viz.,

IV. *That these three Persons bear unanimous testimony to salvation by Christ.* We proceed, therefore, to show,

1. *That salvation by Christ* was the subject testified to by these heavenly Witnesses. They testify to this all-important fact, in a great variety of forms of speech, and

modes of representation: Thus, in connection with our text, they testify that, through Jesus Christ, man may attain to eternal life, with the moral qualifications necessary to his enjoyment of it. In *verse 11*, we learn that the record attested by these Witnesses is “that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in His Son.” In *verses 1-5*, we learn that “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God”—“overcometh the world”—“keepeth the commandments of God”—“loveth Him that begat, and Him that is begotten of Him.” To all this, the Three Witness-bearers in heaven, bear their united testimony.

That this is true, with regard to “THE WORD and THE HOLY GHOST,” needs no proof or exemplification,—as the Gospel and apostolic Epistles are mainly filled with the testimony of *these* two important witnesses, to the truth of these important averments in the record. In *John v, 24*, our blessed Saviour declares: “He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death into life.” *Hearing the word of Christ, and believing on Him that sent Him*, is here represented as securing from condemnation, and from death; and, as putting those, who do so, in possession of everlasting life. In *verse 37*, of the same chapter, we learn that the testimony of THE FATHER, which is to be believed, is that *He hath sent Christ*; and, in *Acts iii, 26*, we are informed that “God, having raised up his Son, Jesus, sent Him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.” Hence, as Christ was sent to bring to pass those very results, which are here ascribed to believing on the Father and to hearing the word of Christ, when the

Father testifies to the sending of His Son, He, in effect, testifies to these purposes of His Son's mission. Again: *Luke xi, 35*. In the close of the transfiguration-scene, when the heavenly visitants of the Saviour had entered into the cloud, which hid them from the gaze of the wondering disciples, we are told, "There came a voice out of the cloud, saying, 'This is my beloved Son: hear Him.'" Here, we have THE FATHER's testimony, borne to the Son, connected with an injunction to "hear Him"—a leading condition, as we have just seen, of escaping condemnation and death, and of securing everlasting life. But, we suppose, it is not at all necessary to multiply specific instances of the fact that THE FATHER has borne witness to the Son, as the author of eternal life, and the giver of those qualifications which are necessary for its enjoyment, since the whole sacrificial system, and the whole ceremonial economy, which were ordained and enjoined by Him, are typical of the mission of His Son, to save mankind; and, since all the prophets, from Samuel to John the Baptist, who spake the Word of God, have given "witness, that, through His name, whosoever believeth in Him, shall receive remission of sins." And, this joint testimony, of all the prophets, is given in the name and on the authority of the Father, and by the inspiration of His Holy Spirit. These THREE, then, THE FATHER, THE WORD and THE HOLY GHOST, bear witness to Christ, as sent of God, to give eternal life to man, and to qualify him to participate in it with the *holy spirits in light*.

2. The Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost are, in the text, said to "bear record in heaven." We suppose this to be true, in the sense most directly conveyed by the

language of the text, as it *is* arranged in our translation; but, we apprehend that *that* arrangement may not *clearly* express the meaning intended to be conveyed. May we not justly suppose that the idea, intended to be conveyed, by the phrase, *in heaven*, was the *residence* of the Witnesses, rather than the *scene* of their testimony? And, would not this idea be more clearly conveyed by the following arrangement of the sentence:— “There are Three in heaven, *that bear record*?” The idea intended to be expressed, we suppose to have been, that there are three heavenly Witnesses, who testify concerning Christ, *to men* — the parties chiefly interested in the testimony.

3. Finally: Our text says, “and these THREE ARE ONE.” Some thorough-going Trinitarians understand this text, as by no means concerned with the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity; and restrain the *Unity*, here spoken of, to the testimony borne by the three heavenly Witnesses. Now, whether the apostle did or did not express the unity of the Trinity in the Divine nature,— and, we believe he did — we have no doubt that the *unity of the testimony*, borne by the three persons in the Godhead, *is* expressly intended. And, how worthy of their attestation, the matter witnessed by them! It embraces the whole scheme of human salvation by Jesus Christ. How flagrantly culpable are those who reject, or even disregard this testimony! And, how unwise, as well as culpable, must we regard them,— seeing that, in so doing, they “reject the counsel of God AGAINST *themselves*,” and cut themselves off from eternal life! On the contrary, how wisely do those who consult their best good, who, by hearing the voice of the Saviour, believing the testimony which God hath given of His Son, and

walking in the commandments of Christ, lay hold on eternal life! Theirs is superior wisdom! Theirs is boundless, unmixed, eternal bliss! And, now, may "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost,"—the blessing of the One true and living God, be and abide with us, evermore! Amen!

DISCOURSE IV.

ON THE CREATION OF ALL THINGS.

The living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein. — Acts xiv, 15.

THE apostles, Paul and Barnabas, after preaching the Gospel extensively in other regions, among the Gentiles, to whom the door of faith had been recently opened, came to Lycaonia, for the same important purpose; and, in two of the cities of that country, Derbe and Lystra, proclaimed their glad tidings to the people. What success attended their preaching in those cities we are not informed. At the latter city, at length, there sat an unfortunate man in their audience, who was born and had always, previously to that time, remained a cripple in both his feet, so that he had never walked. Paul, remarking, probably in the intense interest with which he attended to the word preached, that he had the faith, or capability of the faith, necessary in order to his being made a whole, a sound man, by miraculous power, said unto him, *in a loud voice*, doubtless in order that general attention might be directed to him, “Stand upright on thy feet.” The “word was with power;” and the impotent man immediately “leaped and walked.” The presence of Divine power was recognized, by those who witnessed the effect produced by the word of the apostle— and, who could fail to recognize it? But the Lystrians were polytheists and idolaters; and, instead of considering Paul and Barnabas the servants of

the One true and living God, they, naturally enough, supposed that those apostles were two of their “gods many,” traveling, as they were sometimes fabled to do, in the disguise of men. Hence, they cried out, in their own proper language, “The gods are come down to us, in the likeness of men.” For what reason they imagined Barnabas to be Jupiter, the “king of gods and men,” we are not informed; but, we are informed that Paul was supposed to be Mercurius “because he was the chief speaker;” for, Mercurius was not only supposed to be an eloquent speaker, but was represented to be the messenger and herald, chiefly employed by the superior deities, in their important communications with each other and with men. As the Lystrians believed that they were honored by the presence of Jupiter and Mercurius, in the persons of Barnabas and Paul, they, with ready piety, addressed themselves to the rendering of the homage and the worship to which these deities, especially the former, were believed to be entitled; and, accordingly, the priest of Jupiter, whose temple, it would seem, was an appendage to the city, “brought oxen and garlands unto the gates, and would have done sacrifice” to them, in behalf of the people as well as himself. This movement, while it excited holy horror in the hearts of the apostles, afforded them a favorable opportunity of proclaiming, with peculiar advantage, the great truths of the gospel to the deluded Lystrians. This opportunity they promptly and faithfully improved. To evince their horror at the proposed sacrifice to them, they “rent their clothes,” and at once, to prevent the idolatry, of which they were the objects, from being carried into effect, and to seize the favorable occasion, for declaring the truth to their erring admirers, they “ran

in among the people, crying out, and saying, Sirs ! why do ye these things ? We also are men of like passions with you, and preach unto you that ye should turn from these vanities unto the living God, which made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all things that are therein."

It being the immediate object of Paul and Barnabas to inculcate the existence of the One true and living God—the fundamental truth of all religion, whether *natural* or *revealed*,—it was to be expected that they would bring forward, on this occasion, what they considered the most forcible evidence of that great truth. This they did by assigning to Him the CREATION OF ALL THINGS. No theory of Creation, it is believed, ever was adopted, which did not recognize the exclusive power of Deity in that work. Hence, to affirm that any being was the Creator of all originated existence, was, in effect, to declare that being to be the true God. So, evidently, thought the apostles, Barnabas and Paul. Creation being the work of God, it becomes a matter of religious interest to understand, as far as we may, the extent and nature of this great work. Its *extent* is stated, with entire clearness, in the text. It is there shown to embrace heaven, earth, the sea, and all that are found in all these departments of the created universe. Of the nature of this stupendous work, it will not be easy to present an adequate representation. We shall, however, attempt such a representation, under the following propositions, viz :

I. *Creation is the ORIGINATION of the MATTER and SPIRIT, which constitute heaven, earth, the sea, and all things existing in them.*

II. *Creation is the ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LAWS, by which MATTER and SPIRIT are respectively governed ; and,*

III. *Creation is the ORIGINATION of ALL THOSE ORGANIZATIONS, whether of matter alone, or of matter and spirit in combination, which make up the indefinitely varied whole of the universe.*

I. *Creation is the ORIGINATION of the MATTER and SPIRIT, which constitute heaven, earth, the sea, and all things existing in them.*

The terms of this, our first proposition, imply that before Creation, there was, where heaven, earth and the sea now are, nothing but God in existence—no *matter*, no *created spirit*, in any form of existence. As *space* can be conceived of only in relation to substances existing within it, there was, intelligible to our capacity, no *space*; and, as *time* is the measure of duration, applicable alone to things which have had a beginning, there was no *time*. All was *infinity*—*eternity*—*God!* Nothing could be more idle than to arraign the counsels of Deity, because creation did not take place earlier. Let the era of creation be thrown back beyond its actual date, a million of years, and there is yet, *before it*, an unbeginning eternity, in which no creature is produced; and at the same date posterior to creation, as that at which we exist, there would be precisely the same ground for complaint—that *creation was not earlier*—that there now is: that is, there would be no rational ground for complaining whatever.

We have no positive information which was first created matter or spirit, or whether they were synchronously called into being; nor is it at all important that we should either know, or be able to form a probable conjecture upon the subject. We deem it at least not improbable that they were simultaneously originated. Both were

important, nay, indispensable to the design of the Creator. There is much else that we do not and cannot know. We cannot know, for instance, whether every spiritual existence was created *individually*, or whether there was a *generalical* creation of spiritual existence. In the instance of the highest class of spiritual existence, with which we have any thing like an intimate acquaintance, it would seem that spirit was *generalical* in its creation. But, this class is not *simply* spiritual. We, of course, speak of man; who, being constituted of matter and spirit combined, is not simply spiritual in his nature. He may, therefore, in this respect, be no just type of purely spiritual beings. Again, we know not and cannot know the *essential* nature of either matter or spirit. We know enough of the qualities of each to be entirely certain that their natures as known by us are vastly dissimilar; but we know absolutely nothing as to the proper nature of either the one or the other. Their existence is manifested, and, to some extent, characterized by the qualities, belonging to them respectively, which are placed within the reach of our faculties; and this is all we can know in regard to them. Once more: of the process of creation—the *modus operandi* of originating matter and spirit, we know nothing, beyond the simple fact that God *commanded* or *willed* their origination. “He spake, and it was done. He commanded and it stood fast.” This is all we know, all, even that we can *imagine* of the matter. When we examine a piece of human mechanism, one of our principal inquiries is, of what materials is it constructed? We never dream of these having been originated by its constructor. But, when speaking of *creation*, as the work of God, our first idea is, that the “things which are seen, were not made

of things which do appear."—*Heb.* xi, 3, but "by the word of God."

Of the matter and spirit, thus brought into existence by the word of God, heaven, earth, the sea, and all that inhabit them, are composed, either by the organization of matter alone, or by its combination with spirit, or by simple spiritual existence. We know not of any third ingredient, in the vast and various compound, called *the created universe*. Nay, we can have no conception of any other ingredient than matter and spirit. Matter is incalculably diversified in its form and in the special laws of its government in its various forms. But, whether solid or fluid, whether dense or rare, whether attractive or repellent, whether exhaling noxious and disgusting odors or the sweetest and most refreshing perfumes, whether an inconsiderable, hardly perceptible atom or a stupendous mountain, whether in a form of surpassing loveliness or of disgusting and hideous deformity, it is still only matter. And, unless united with spirit, or under the impulse of spirit, is, in all its possible arrangements, subject to the laws ordained for the government of matter as such.

We suppose that matter came into existence with all its properties or qualities, and not that it was first created, and then endowed with the properties that belong to it in its present state. We can scarcely conceive of matter without, at least, some of its properties; as, for instance, *extension* and *figure*. However attenuated we may conceive matter to be in its minutest dimensions, though a million times less than can be seen by the aid of the most powerful glasses, we think of it, *necessarily*, as occupying space, to the exclusion of all other matter; and *this* is extension. Extension, however limited, supposes confi-

guration or shape : and, hence, the idea of matter necessarily suggests that of extension and figure. It is, then, highly probable that matter was created with its properties, and not endued with them subsequently to its creation. So, also, we deem it highly probable that spirit came into existence in possession of all its capacities, its capabilities, its susceptibilities and its powers. These powers and susceptibilities, we know, are capable of development, refinement and enlargement. This is a matter of constant experience and observation ; but, we never imagine the origination of one new power or susceptibility, by any process which takes place subsequently to the beginning of a spiritual existence. Nor can we conceive of a spirit destitute of the susceptibilities and powers which are proper to that order of beings.

Of the creation of matter and spirit, how little can be said ! How little can be even imagined ! We see, before us, an infinite capacity for created being, either spiritual, material or mixed, with not even an atom of matter, not one spiritual creature, to serve as a nucleus, to which to rally kindred natures, or as a seed, from which to multiply the kindred existences. But, this infinitude is pervaded by a Being, to whom *possibility* is *power*. Whatever is not intrinsically impossible, He can do. *The creation of matter and spirit is possible* ; and, as a manifestation of its possibility, and, as showing forth "His eternal power and Godhead," the Everlasting One comes forth, in the exercise of His omnipotence, and effectually commands the existence of both these constituents of creature-existence. At His word, they come into being. This is all the profoundest philosophy can reason out in regard to creation ; this is all that the liveliest fancy can paint of this stupen-

dous performance; and, here, of course, we leave our first proposition — exhausted, we conceive, though so briefly and imperfectly treated. And, we proceed to consider our next proposition, *viz.*:

II. *Creation is the ESTABLISHMENT OF THE LAWS by which matter and spirit are respectively governed.*

We have already supposed that the properties of matter and the capacities of spirit were given in the act of creation. These properties and capacities are the result of the operation of those laws by which these several departments of creation are respectively governed, if, indeed, they be not identical with those laws:—they, at any rate, indicate the laws of those natures to which they respectively belong. But, what are these properties and capacities? Are they essentially and necessarily qualities of the natures they regulate?—or, are they impressions from without those natures, having not only their existence, but their efficiency directly and exclusively from the will and power of their ever-present, ever-active Author? We adopt the latter member of the alternative, presented in these interrogatories. Matter, we conceive, is wholly incapable of *independent* activity and efficiency, whether from its intrinsic nature, or as derived from the laws impressed upon it by its Creator. We suppose that the moment in which the Divine energy should be withdrawn from matter, would see it cease from all those operations which are ascribed to the influence of the laws of matter. The *vis inertiae*, which all science considers an essential property of matter, seems to us utterly inconsistent with any change of direction in the operation of matter without a correspondent impulse from an agency not material in its nature. And, though the strict dependence of *spirit*

upon its Creator, for its *capabilities*, is not so obvious as is that of matter for its properties, yet, such dependence is clearly taught in the Word of God. "In Him (God) we live, and move, and have our being." Were the sustaining energy of Him, who "upholdeth all things by the word of His power," withholden from the highest order of created spiritual beings, not only would the capabilities, by which such spiritual beings are distinguished, cease from their efficiency, but those beings themselves must fall back into that non-existence, from which they were called forth by their Creator. The *conservation* of all created existence, as well as its *origination*, is ascribed to the Creator, equally by sound philosophy as by Divine Revelation. Created beings can no more sustain themselves, than they could have brought themselves into being. And, as the continuance of their existence must result from the Divine support, so must the efficiency of the laws of their natures proceed from the constant presence of the Divine energy. The laws of matter, though producing an endless variety of the most stupendous results, are few and simple. It will not be expected that, in this discourse, these laws should be discussed, or even stated in detail. It is, we suppose, sufficient for us to remark that these laws are adequate, as instruments in the hands of the Creator and Conservator of all things, to the production, maintenance and regulation of the various states in which matter is found, from its most simple to its most complex forms of existence — from the pure carbon of the diamond, to the substance that is compounded of many ingredients — from the hardly perceptible grain of sand, to the many-sphered and magnificent solar system. Attraction, in its various modes of operation; the interfusion of caloric,

with its expansive influence, throughout all material aggregations; the radiation of light; the property of exciting taste, and emitting odors and the *statu quo* tendency of the *vis inertiae*, account for, if they do not produce, nearly all the phenomena of the material universe with which we are acquainted. It is eminently worthy the infinitely wise and powerful Creator to produce, by instrumentalities so few and simple, results so numerous, so various and so magnificent.

The laws of spiritual existence and operation are equally worthy the perfections of Him, who is the "Father of the spirits of all flesh." Of the laws of spiritual *sub-sistence*, we know absolutely nothing, save that the same mysterious energy which called it into existence, "holdeth the soul in life." If any instrumentality be employed, for this purpose, it eludes the observation of the most perspicacious and deep-searching investigator of the mysteries of metaphysics. No psychological physiology has ever been even imagined by the boldest explorers of nature's mysteries. It is not so, however, in regard to the laws of spiritual operation. Much may be — much is already known of the laws of mental action. And, here, as in the case of matter, the infinitely wise Contriver has provided for the most astonishing results, by the endowment of spirit with a few simple capabilities. Perhaps every operation of spirit may be traced to one or more of the following well-known capabilities which belong to it, *viz.*, *consciousness*, *memory*, *perception*, *susceptibility to passion*, *will* or *self-determination* and *control over matter*. By means of the two first, *consciousness* and *memory*, spirit not only recognizes its own existence and personal identity, through its whole course of being, but collects and treasures

up the history of all that enters into its character. By *perception*, it not only gathers the facts external to itself, which fall within the range of its observation, but ascertains the relations of all the facts acquired by it, whether by consciousness or through the senses; and this is reasoning. It decides, from these relations, upon the character of the facts perceived, their tendency and their fitness or unfitness; and this is *judgment*. When the relations perceived are of a *moral* nature, the judgment which results is *conscience*. When the relations perceived regard the beauty, sublimity, harmony, &c., of the objects contemplated, the judgment that is formed is taste; and, so in regard to other objects of perception, which are usually considered distinct faculties or capabilities, they may be regarded as operations of the perceptive faculty. *Susceptibility to passion* and the *will* are the provisions, in the constitution of spirit, to secure action, and voluntary action. If there be, and we know there are, spiritual beings endowed with *susceptibility to passion* and the faculty of *self-determination*, who are not responsible for their self-elected course of action, it is because that, for some reason, they cannot perceive the moral relations of that course. This is the case with all infants and all insane persons of mature age. No one thinks of holding either of these classes responsible for the moral character of their action; though they are the subjects of passion, and though they resolutely will their own course of action. This is the case, because they are deemed incapable of perceiving the moral relations of the action upon which they have determined, and for no other reason. Whereas perceptions of moral relations, susceptibility to passion and will, wherever they co-exist, constitute the spirit which is endowed with

them, a responsible agent. That power to *control matter* belongs to spirit, none can doubt, after duly considering the control which the mind or spirit in man exerts over the material portion of his own nature—his *nerves* and his *muscles*, and, through these, over the world of matter without himself. *How* this control is exerted, it is idle to inquire; but, the fact itself is so notorious and so indisputable, that, however inscrutable the mode of operation, the power is, we suppose, universally admitted to exist.

What mighty achievements, by means of these few and simple capabilities, has spirit—creature-spirit performed. To what heights of science, to what depths of discovery, to what an extent of knowledge has it attained! How has it dazzled the eye and charmed the imagination, by the splendors and the beauty of architecture, sculpture and painting! With what heart-melting melodies and soul-thrilling harmonies has it, by means of eloquence, music and song, enraptured the listening thousands, whose happiness it has been to come within the range of their influence! How has it multiplied to man the means of subsistence and comfort, and abridged the toils of the condition in which his rebellion has placed him, in which he is doomed, “in the sweat of his face to eat bread all the days of his life.” What efficient forms of government has it instituted, to repress the vices of the refractory and to protect society in the enjoyment of its rights and privileges! What noble examples of moral virtue, in sages, in statesmen, in martyrs, and in the poor and unregarded among men, has it produced, to display the true and elevated dignity to which man, in all kinds of society and in all kinds of circumstances, may attain! How pure, how ennobling, how worthy of God and how suited to the

nature, condition and capabilities of man, the system of religion, which, under the instruction of Revelation, has been compassed by the spirit of man ! A religion which displays not only the Divine perfections, but the nature of man, his obligations, his defalcation, his remedy and an immortality of retribution, according as he shall or shall not profit by the remedy offered to his acceptance in the Gospel.

These laws of matter and spirit — in other words, these properties of matter and these capabilities of spirit, we say belong essentially to creation ; and were, we suppose, imparted to their respective subjects in the act of creation, and not superadded to them subsequently to that act. We, moreover, have advanced the opinion that these properties of matter and capabilities of spirit are not of the nature of the matter and spirit which they qualify, nor abstract laws, impressed by the Creator, and left by Him to perform their various functions, in the economy of matter and spirit, by their own proper efficiency ; but that they are the ever-present energy of the Creator Himself, acting in a settled direction, “according to the counsel of His own will.” We proceed to show:

III. *That creation is the ORIGINATION of all those ORGANIZATIONS, whether of matter alone, or of matter and spirit in combination, which make up the indefinitely varied whole of the created universe.*

In our remarks on this proposition, we shall be guided by the account of creation which is given us in the Book of Genesis—the only account which has any respectable claim upon rational attention and confidence.

And, first, in that authentic record, we read that, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.”—

Gen. i, 1. We do not suppose that, by the term *heaven*, in this statement, we are to understand that “house not made with hands,” in which “there are many mansions,” that “Holy City, New Jerusalem,” that “better country,” where unfallen and redeemed spirits dwell and rejoice “in the presence of God and the Lamb.” But, we apprehend, the meaning of it to be the aggregate of the *heavenly bodies*, which move and shine above the earth—the sun, the planets, the moon and the stars. Of the *stars*, little more is known than that they are bodies of immense magnitude and at immeasurable distances from the earth; that they are, if not fixed in their positions, so nearly stationary that their motions are not appreciable and much less calculable, by the most skillful astronomers, aided by the most powerful glasses that have been invented, and that they, consequently, do not belong to the solar system, nor have any dependence on it that can be ascertained, by any observation or calculation that has been instituted. It is confidently believed that they, as the sun, are luminous bodies; and it is supposed that each of them is a center of some system resembling the solar system in all essential particulars. In other words, the general opinion is that the stars are all suns. It is farther supposed to be not improbable that, as the planets and their satellites in the solar system, and in all like systems, revolve around their respective suns, so these several systems revolve around some great center; and that therefore, no sun, nor planet, nor satellite is wholly independent on any other, throughout the immense extent of space; and that, consequently, the material creation may be regarded as one vast, complex whole. We deem all these suppositions probable; and, if they suggest the truth, what a stupendous

organization of worlds do they present to our admiring contemplation ! How worthy the power and majesty of the infinite Creator !

Of the *sun*, little is known, except that it is a luminous body of vast magnitude, some ninety millions of miles distant from the earth, and the center around which the earth and other planets revolve, with such regularity that their motions can be calculated with entire certainty. Of the nature of this vast body, whose functions are so vitally important in the solar system, nothing is certainly known ; and the opinions of astronomers have been widely different in regard to it. Some have supposed it to be an ever-burning mass ; others have conjectured it to be a vast accumulation of electron, while others consider it a dark body, surrounded by a luminous atmosphere. All this is mere conjecture ; but, it is *known* that the sun is the *instrument* of illumination and heat to the planets with which it is connected. *How* it exerts this instrumentality, the sagest philosophers cannot determine. They cannot tell *what* is either light or heat. How then should they ascertain the *manner* in which they are supplied by the sun ? The *former* was long supposed to consist of luminous particles of matter, of extreme tenuity, radiated by the sun and other luminous bodies. But, difficulties existed, in this hypothesis, which scarcely could be obviated ; and another has been adapted, *viz.* that light is an undulatory motion. An undulatory motion of *what* ? we would ask. All undulatory motion does not excite the sensation of light. Would it not be more becoming in philosophers to state what they know, than thus to affect discoveries which have not—which, perhaps, never can be made ? Of the nature of *heat*, as little is

known as of the nature of light. Much is known, in regard to the properties and effects of both; and, until their nature is, if it ever can be, ascertained, should not philosophy satisfy itself with the development and manifestation of these? We may not longer dwell upon this point interesting as it is, but must proceed to other particulars.

The *moon* is a satellite of the earth. Other planets have similar attendants, which accompany them as the moon does the earth, in their revolutions around the sun, performing revolutions around their proper planets, in orbits of their own, as well as upon their several axes. It is well ascertained that the light of the moon, considerable as it is, is not produced by that body, but is the reflected light of the sun. Viewed only in relation to the office of reflecting such an amount of light to our earth as she does, the moon is of great importance. But there are other important influences exerted by this interesting satellite. To a great extent the *tides* of seas and oceans, so important in navigation, and probably not less so to the healthfulness of our globe, are produced by her influence. Besides, we have no doubt that she exerts an important influence on meteorological phenomena, and thereby upon both vegetable and animal economy.

2. The *earth*, to man the most interesting of all the bodies which constitute the solar system, was, we are informed, in *Gen. i, 2*, "Without form and void, and darkness *was* upon the face of the deep," when it was created. It contained doubtless, however, every particle of matter, while in this crude state, which belonged to it after it was reduced to order. It was, therefore, competent to enter into the organization of the solar system; as it possessed,

in the former state, the same amount of *gravitation*, as in the latter. What gravitation *is*, we know not; but, by it is expressed the tendency of one mass of matter towards another. The influence by which this tendency is produced is an absolute mystery; but that the tendency exists, in a manner so entirely uniform that its measure can be calculated with exact certainty, is a well-known fact; and this tendency, acting upon the *vis inertiae* of matter, explains the various motions of the vast bodies which constitute the solar system. The gravitating tendency of matter would draw all bodies toward each other in straight lines; but the *vis inertiae* would continue the motion of the matter in the direction in which it was originally impelled. If, then, the original direction of the bodies which revolve around the sun were, as we believe it to have been, *horizontal* to the sun, the effect of these two influences would be, if there were no interfering influences, that those bodies would revolve about the sun in orbits perfectly *circular*. But, there being such interfering influences exerted, the fact is that the orbits of the planets are not precisely circular. Besides the revolution around the sun, every planet performs a revolution upon its own axis, from west to east; and thus rolls round its annual course. The revolution around the sun, produces the year of the planet, and the revolution upon its own axis, its day. The axis of the earth is not horizontal to the sun—if it were, there would be no variation of the climate at any given point on the earth's surface; but it is inclined several degrees towards the perpendicular. This inclination occasions a change in the position of every part of the earth's surface in relation to the sun, and produces those vicissitudes which we denominate

Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. For several thousand years these various revolutions have been going on, with such a degree of exactness and regularity, that the astronomer can calculate, with entire certainty, the exact position of any of the known bodies constituting the solar system, at any minute of any day in that long lapse of time. No horological instrument, of human construction ever performed its functions, for even one month, with anything like the exactitude with which these immense bodies have been rolling around their various orbits, through thousands of years. Here is wisdom in design, skill in contrivance and power in execution which could be found in the Infinite alone! Here is an organization, with which the boasted inventions of man will bear no adequate comparison!

But, let us fix our attention, more especially, upon the Earth. When spoken of *generally*, it includes in the idea intended to be expressed, both land and water—continents and islands, oceans, seas, lakes and rivers. But, the land and water were not separated from each other in the first act of creation. Darkness, too, enveloped this mass of confused materials. “And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.” From this it would seem that, if the whole of the globe was not a mixture of earth and water, with the watery particles, as of less specific gravity than those of earth, on the surface, the solid portion of the globe was completely submerged. Of the motion of the Spirit of God, upon the face of the waters, we know and can know nothing; but in regard to the *object* of that motion, there can be little doubt or question—it was, doubtless, the establishment of order in the now chaotic mass. It was now for Him to put into operation those

elective affinities which should combine into masses, metals, stones, earths and gasses, which were to enter into the composition of the solid portions of the globe; and to dispose each in its appropriate position.

3. Up to this time light had not visited the earth, if indeed light at all existed. We have already said that we know absolutely nothing of the nature of light; and hence, we cannot infer that as the sun which is *now* the instrument of illumination to our earth, was then the center of the solar system; therefore, light must have existed. We doubt the possibility of making it apparent that light existed before the sublime commandment of the Creator spake it into being; and, whether, till He endued the sun with the capability of pouring a flood of inexhaustible light upon the worlds dependent upon His ministry, He was not involved in as gross darkness as was the earth itself. Be this as it may, this is certain—that light had not shed its genial influence upon the earth, when this command was given forth. If it previously existed, and had been withheld from the earth by some opaque obstruction, that obstruction was removed by the almighty fiat; and the gloom of the previously perpetual night vanished “before the brightness of its coming.” We, however, are among those who adopt the opinion that light was *created* by the command, “Let there be light!” and, not that vapors or clouds, which had previously interposed between the sun and the earth, were dissipated by natural causes, acting consentaneously with that command.

4. The next step in the creation or formation of our earth, with its immediate appendages, was the calling of the *firmament* into existence. “And God said, let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide

the waters from the waters. And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament, from the waters which were above the firmament." We suppose that by the term *firmament*, we are to understand the *atmosphere*. The waters, which are rarified by heat into the form of vapor, are held in suspension in the superior regions of the atmosphere; until, condensed by cold or precipitated by electricity, they descend to the earth, in the form of dew or rain, to moisten and fertilize the soil, and to supply the upland regions of the earth with water; in the form of lakes, springs, rivulets and rivers. The firmament, or atmosphere, is the great magazine of meteoric agencies, by which the earth is rendered productive of vegetation, and rendered habitable by the various tribes of animals which live upon its surface. It is, moreover, the great instrument of *sound*—the chord whose vibrations give utterance to all the varied notes of nature's mighty concert. By its means, is heard the eloquence of the orator and the melody of the musician—the whisper of the zephyr and the roar of the thunder. The instruction and the pleasure of conversation could not be enjoyed without its intervention. What is most important of all, perhaps, in the uses of the atmosphere, is that by means of respiration, it imparts vitality to the blood, upon which the continuance of life is constantly and absolutely dependent. The atmosphere is so important in the economy of the earth, that a whole day in the creative process was appropriated to its production and organization, as the previous day had been to the creation of light, and to the establishment of the diurnal revolution of the earth, producing the vicissitudes of *day* and *night*.

5. On the third day of creation the waters, previously it would seem, either mingled with or overspreading the earth, are gathered together and confined within proper limits—the Almighty Creator saying to them, “Thus far shall ye come and no farther, and here shall your proud waves be stayed.” Who shall adequately conceive of this stupendous operation? How immense the reservoir, into which the waters were to be collected! How numerous, serpentine, capacious and extended the channels which were to carry off from the land into this vast reservoir, the waters with which the land was flooded! But “God spake and it was done.” “God said, let the waters under heaven be gathered unto one place, and let the dry land appear; and it was so. And God called the dry land earth, and the gathering together of the waters called He seas.” Immediately, upon the Divine command, down sunk more than half the earth’s surface, in many parts of it to unfathomable depths. From all portions not thus depressed, rushed the waters under the whole heavens; till by suitable drains, were drawn together, in oceans capacious basins, the superfluous waters of the whole earth, and the dry land emerged with mountain and valley, hill and dale, diversifying its face, to be the proper scene of those vegetable and animal organizations, with which the All-wise Creator was about to adorn and people its vast area. The sea has been called *the wide waste of waters*. Nothing could be more unjust; for, besides that the sea is occupied by innumerable tribes of sensuous beings, whose constitutions are adapted to the circumstances in which they are placed, is it not notorious that, without such a surface as is spread out by the seas, evaporation, sufficient to the purpose of watering the earth, by dews

and rains, would be impracticable ; and earth, throughout its whole extent, would be sterile and arid as the deserts of Sahara ? Again, how greatly has the intercourse, between the most distant parts of the globe been facilitated by the existence of this highway of nations ! *A waste of waters !* Nay, verily, but a scene of abundant and varied life and enjoyment—a reservoir, whence the earth is irrigated and rendered fruitful—the artery of social existence—the great thoroughfare of commerce ! To render it the more suitable for this latter purpose, as well as to prevent noxious exhalations, from its immensely extended surface, the water of the seas is strongly impregnated with salts, which increase its buoyancy and lessen its tendency to stagnation and decomposition. Well might the psalmist adoringly exclaim, “In wisdom hast thou made them all !—so is this great and wide sea ; wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships !” Such, and so important is the sea !

6. On this same third day of creation, the earth or dry land was made to produce the various vegetable tribes, which adorn the earth, and minister in so important a manuer to the support and comfort of the sensuous creatures which roam or dwell upon its surface. Nutritious *grass*, from which the grazing families of animal existence derive subsistence and pleasure—*herbs*, embracing the various *grain-plants*, yielding seed, one or the other, or both, calculated either for food, pleasure or medicine—*trees*, bearing fruit, in which was contained the seed necessary for the propagation of trees of like kind. Then was spread out the beautiful carpet of green, variegated with flowers of every hue, and sending up delieious fragrance

to regale the senses of beings capable of such gratification; then rose the shrub, in lowly beauty, by the side of the stately pine, the majestic oak, the beautiful cedar and the graceful palm. Then, too, the laden boughs, of herb, shrub and tree, displayed their various fruits, rich, delicious and nutritive—the bounty of a Providence abundant in resources, and as munificent as abundant in resources. Every variety of taste is catered to, in this provision. Every sense, capable of being served by such ministry, is provided with appropriate gratification, in these fruits of the field and of the forest. Feeling, and smell, and taste, and sight are as intensely regaled, as if pleasure were the only object of the provision, instead of being a mere accessory to the more important purpose of perpetuating existence.

7. We have already remarked that the sun is, directly, and the moon, *by the reflection of the sun's rays, indirectly*, the great instruments of enlightening the earth; and, that the revolution of the earth on its own axis occasions the vicissitudes of day and night. We have supposed, moreover, that when the heaven and the earth were created, they were endued with those properties which belong to matter; and that, consequently, the various revolutions of the solar system went into immediate operation at the time of creation. We know, also, that *light* was called into existence on the first day of the creation. How, then, are we to account for the fact that the sun and moon were made the instruments of illuminating the earth—more properly, how are we to account for the fact that the sun shed not his light upon the earth and the moon, until the fourth day? Did we know the nature of light, and by what means the sun illuminates the planets in the solar

system, and their satellites, we might possibly be able to answer this question ; but, as we do not know either the one or the other, we dare hardly venture even a conjectural reply to it. But, may we not, without presumption, hazard the supposition that, perhaps the sun was not invested with the property, appendage, or whatever it is, which renders him the instrument of illumination to the inferior bodies with which he is connected, until the fourth day of the creative process ? If this be not the true solution of the problem, we confess to an utter inability to conceive of any other. Light existed previously to the ordering of the sun's instrumentality in the illumination of the earth and other similarly situated bodies ; but, though the revolution of the earth on its axis brought the hours in regular succession, with the corresponding vicissitudes of light and darkness, we know that the light enjoyed was not from the sun. Whence it was we know not, nor can we determine whether it was electric or phosphorescent, or what was its nature. This only do we know, that until the fourth day, the sun was not established as the source of light to the earth by day, nor the moon as the principal instrument of that inferior degree of light, by which the darkness of night is mitigated. Is it not probable that, if the stars be suns to other systems of worlds, they received their great commissions to illuminate their respective dependents at the same time that our sun received his ? This seems to be intimated, when, in the history of the fourth day's work, it is said "He made the stars"-as well as "made the sun to give light by day, and the moon to give light by night."

The conclusion of the fourth day beheld a beauteous world, diversified by land and water; mountain and valley,

hill and dale, adorned in variegated beauty and splendor; grass and herb, shrub and tree, flower and fruit overspreading the face of the Earth, with variety, beauty and ample provision for the gratification of smell and taste. This Earth, so beauteous, was wrapped within the folds of the many-propertied atmosphere — the nutriment of life and fertility, and the instrument of sound. And, upon this lovely habitation, fitted up for the accommodation of animal existence, was poured, in the day-time, a flood of solar light, to reveal the latent beauties of the world, in all their loveliness, and in all their splendor; while, in the night-season, was shed down, upon those beauties, a paler, softer light, investing them with a character to impress the heart with tenderness and soul-subduing and heart-purifying awe. But, as yet, these ample provisions were unappropriated. No beings, with capacities to put them to use, were yet in existence. But, *thus* it was not to continue. The infinitely wise and good Being, who had fitted up this glorious habitation, would not, could not, without a just imputation of folly, have left it unoccupied. It would have been to spread a sumptuous feast, of which there were to be no partakers. Such waste of means, such mal-appropriation of benefits would have been grossly incongruous to the Divine character. Hence,

8. On the fifth day of the creation, when all needful for their reception, accommodation and enjoyment of existence had been prepared, *animals*, endowed with sensibility, and senses suited to the capacities of enjoyment, belonging to their respective places in the extended scale of sensuous beings, were called into existence, by the omnific word of the Creator. Of the various tribes of animals, called into being on the fifth day, we cannot be expected to give a

description, or even a catalogue. They were those which swim in the waters, and those which fly in the air. From the scarcely animalized coral and sponge-producing organizations, through all the various forms and grades of testacea, crustacea, articulata and vertebrata, up to the whale, which, for superior organization, as well as for size, may be considered the superior inhabitant of the waters, we see a regularly ascending scale of animal existence, with appropriate endowments in every class in the ascending series. So, also, from the ephemeral insect, that flaunts its hour in the evening sunbeam, to the condor, magnificent in strength and size, to the bird of paradise and the peafowl, splendid in their beauty of plumage, and to the nightingale and the mocking-bird, the sweetest of nature's songsters, scarcely can imagination conceive of a chasm in the scale of winged existence. Thus, on the fifth day, were the waters and the air peopled with inhabitants, suited precisely to the positions they were intended to occupy, endlessly varied in form, appetite and capacity, and constituting, in the aggregate, an adequate population for the departments of the world in which they were to have their habitations.

9. On the sixth day, the earth itself was peopled, with animal existences, from an exceedingly low grade of being, up to the highest glory of God's work on earth. The creeping thing — the reptile, that hides itself in the dust, the mammalia, in their thousands of tribes, ascending, by regular and almost imperceptible gradations, from the mouse to the mammoth; from the timid hare, to the magnanimous lion; from the stupid sloth, to the sagacious elephant, and that human caricature, the witty and mischievous monkey. In grade after grade, in the ascending series, the organization is seen to be more and still more

perfect, the development to be more expanded, the approximation of the inferior creatures to unapproachable humanity nearer. No space, in the scale, is left, where the acutest observer could find room for a new order of beings. Genus presses on genus, species run into species so intimately that it is difficult to trace the lines that divide them from each other. We speak of inferior animals; for, between the most elevated ranks of these and man there are lines of distinction, so broad and strongly marked, that there can be no difficulty in classing them apart. We do not intend to say that man is distinguished from other animals by the faculty of *reason*. We do not believe that he is: but, we do mean to say that man alone gives any evidence of religious or moral perception or capacity. Nor are there any other races, of terrestrial creatures, which have ever afforded the slightest evidence that they were endowed with the capability of continuous improvement in Science or Art. They may reason—we think there is invincible proof that many of them, at least, do reason; but their reasonings are upon their own sensations alone. They do not appear to be capable of either abstraction or taking into the scope of their reasoning the experience of others. Hence, all they learn has sole reference to what concerns their own proper and individual interest—derives no aid from any preceding generations of their species, nor serves any purpose of enlightening those which are to come after them. Moreover, there is no instance on record, we believe, of one step, in either Science or Art, having been suggested, to any of the inferior animals, by what they had been taught. The point to which their teacher leads them, is never exceeded, by the slightest advance on their part. These

things show important differences, between man and the inferior animals — differences not accidental, but fundamental in their respective constitutions.

There are, however, some things which are common to all animals, man included. One of these is *life*. What *life* is, who shall presume to say? And, yet, what is more familiar to our observation and our thoughts than life? It is not organization in its most perfect state. This is evident, from the fact that bodies, recently deprived of life, can, by means of a galvanic current, be made to perform the muscular functions which, in the living subject, were under the control of life. It is not galvanism, electricity nor heat; for, though the first of these can produce muscular motion, in a subject recently deprived of life, neither it, nor any, nor all of these subtle fluids can produce the phenomena of life. It is not the nervous fluid, nor the nervous system; for it is by acting on these, that galvanism gives play to the muscles of the dead. What it is, no physiologist has yet discovered; and we doubt whether any one ever will penetrate its profound mystery.

Sensibility, or the capability of sensation, is another common property of animal nature. No animal, whose constitution is within the scope of human scrutiny, is destitute of this property. Indeed, we cannot conceive of animal life where it is wanting. This connects the individual existence with the surrounding world; and, it is alike important to the safety and the subsistence of the animal which is endowed with it. Its scope may be extremely limited, or immensely extended; but it would seem that, to an extent commensurate with the wants of the animal, it is a necessity of its nature.

Thought, too, we believe to be common to animals. It

certainly is so, in the case of all animals whose developments are sufficiently prominent to be the objects of human investigation. As in all else, so in thought, the endowment of each class of animals is adapted to the wants of the class; and, we suppose, that in some, this is exceedingly small.

Passion, likewise, is common to all animals, whose capabilities we are able to ascertain. They evince desire and aversion, anger and fear, and joy and sorrow, as the effects of corresponding influences exerted upon them.

They have also *volition* or *will*. The lowest ranks of animals, whose actions can be traced by man, elect their own course of action as freely and independently as man himself. In all these endowments, animals generally have a common property; and, they may, therefore, be considered as universal attributes of animal nature, if not essential elements in the constitution of that nature.

Of the creation of man, and of his position in the scale of creature-existence, we do not *now* intend to treat particularly, having it in purpose to devote an entire discourse hereafter to these subjects.

Before we conclude this discourse, it may be proper to notice briefly the principal *theories of creation* which have obtained currency among thinking men. We do not deem it necessary to bestow any attention on any theory of the heavens and earth, which does not proceed upon the fundamental idea of a Creator. In our view, there is such flagrant absurdity in the supposition, that these exist, in such vast magnificence, order, adaptation of means to ends and endless variety, with no wisdom to have planned them, no skill to have arranged them, no power to have produced them, that it would be a waste of time and an affront upon

logic, to argue against it. The theories we shall notice, *equally* recognize a Creator; and, so far as this point is concerned, are equally within the pale of reason and religion. They are three:

(1.) That spirit and matter, in all its various departments, were created, and the laws governing all the departments belonging to them, impressed upon them by the Creator. This spirit and matter were, however, left by the Creator in a state utterly without order, to work out, by means of the laws impressed upon them, the separations, combinations and arrangements which were to result in the organization of the solar system, the disposition of the stellar bodies, the arrangement of the earth into land and water, and the production of its minerals, vegetables and animals. The *date* of creation is, by this theory, thrown back indefinitely — beyond even the boldest flight of imagination. This theory is called the *development-theory*.

(2.) The second theory resembles the first in many particulars, but differs from it, in supposing that, the various organizations of the created universe, instead of being developed by natural law, were produced by a number of creations, with vast intervals between them, say of a thousand or thousands of years — of these creations, we see each rising above that which preceded it, in the perfection of its productions; till the solar system, as it now is, the earth and its present various races of inhabitants, were the glorious results of the final act in the great drama of creation. This theory is attempted to be reconciled with the Mosiac account of creation, by supposing that *DAY*, in that account, does not mean, as it now does, a lapse of twenty-four hours, but a period of indefinite duration. Both these theories owe their existence, we

believe to — they certainly receive their principal support from — geological phenomena.

(3.) The third theory is founded upon a *literal* understanding of the Mosaic account of creation ; and suppose that, in one hundred and forty-four hours, God created the matter and spirit of the heavens and the earth; gave laws to both ; reduced to the order which was to continue, so long as they should exist, the heavens and the earth ; arranged the earth into land and water, and furnished it with minerals, vegetables and animals, in all essential particulars, as it is now furnished.

We are unable to receive the first of these theories, if for no other reason, because that, in the lapse of forty centuries or more, during which the operations of nature have been observed, with intense curiosity and shrewd intelligence, not the slightest tendency to such developments, as the theory supposes, have ever been detected ; and, we deem it hardly reasonable to suppose that the energy, to which this theory ascribes such vast and various operations, has wholly exhausted itself, or, that, if still in operation, it should so entirely have eluded the scrutiny of naturalists for such a series of centuries. The changes, which are perpetually going on throughout nature, produce no new form of existence, nor advance an inferior nature to one of a higher order. True, the *grub* becomes a *chrysalis*, and the *chrysalis* becomes a *butterfly* ; but, then, the *egg* of the *butterfly* produces the *grub* again ; and, this round is repeated, without any improvement of the species, and without the production of any new form of existence. The absence of all discoverable tendency in Nature, to such developments as are supposed by this theory, we regard as fatal to its claims upon rational con-

fidence; and, we, therefore, dismiss it, without further consideration.

We cannot receive the second theory, because it is inconsistent with what we understand to be the plain, untortured signification of the Mosaic account of creation; and, because there is, as we think, no fact brought to light, either by geological discoveries or otherwise, which renders a less natural interpretation of that account necessary. Supposing creation completed in one hundred and forty-four hours, fifty-eight and a half centuries ago, we conceive that there has been time and means for every change in the structure of the earth. We *know* that both vegetable and animal substances are fossilized with great rapidity: a few years—not centuries—being sufficient for the purpose. The argument from the *position* of the *Saurian* fossils and their neighboring vegetable fossils, and the absence, from that position, of the remains of man and of other mammalia, is utterly untenable, we think; because the regions inhabited by these Saurians and producing these vegetables, were manifestly unsuited to man, or to any of the other tribes of mammalia, except a very few, which either inhabit the waters or are amphibious. Besides, the regions of the earth, which have been examined by geologists, are remote from the primitive residence of the human race, and, probably, we think, from the early range of the higher orders of inferior mammalia. If it were certain, as most surely it is not, that the *Saurian* and other earliest subjects of fossilization, were extinct, this would by no means prove their *pre-Adamite* existence. Other races, confessedly belonging to the present constitution of things, are probably extinct, as, for instance, the *Mastodon*. The immense deposits of mineral coal,

which are found scattered over the globe, are relied upon as evidence of an antiquity in the earth, far greater than is consistent with the Adamite era of creation. But, the whole weight of this evidence depends upon an *assumption* which we esteem not only gratuitous but erroneous—namely, that this coal is fossilized vegetable matter. Allowing this assumption to be correct, we readily admit that millions of years would have been scarcely sufficient to produce, collect together and fossilize such immense quantities of vegetable substances as were necessary to form the coal-deposits in England, in Pennsylvania and other regions of the earth. The only ground, we believe, on which the assumed vegetable origin of coal finds any thing like support, is the fact, that vegetable matter has been found in coal regions, more or less fossilized. How much more rational, as it appears to us, would be the inference, from this fact, that vegetable matter was *casually* present, in the chemical process by which coal was produced; as the *nail*, in California, was present, in the chemical formation of the auriferous quartz, in which it was found imbedded. That the chemical combination of the proper elementary earths, metals, gasses and salts, produce many, perhaps most, of the minerals which are found by geological research, will not, we suppose, be questioned by any well-informed person at this day; and, why should coal be regarded as an exception? Has the analysis of *that* mineral brought to light any fact which would forbid the supposition of its chemical formation? And, if not, is it not far more probable that it was *thus* formed, than that masses of vegetable matter, in such almost inconceivable quantities, should have accumulated, in the coal-regions, as would have been sufficient, on the

fossilization theory? But, we cannot engage in the discussion of this theory at greater length—our limits forbid our doing so. Enough has been said to show the opinion we entertain, and to indicate the line of thought by which that opinion has been reached. We must, therefore, dismiss this point, and proceed to remark that we heartily embrace the third of the theories we have specified; and,

3. This we do, because, as we have already stated, we consider it in accordance with the plain, unsophisticated meaning of the Mosaic account of creation. That it is so, will, we think, be disputed by no one; and, we consider it extremely hazardous, as well as blameworthy, to depart from the *literal* signification of Scripture-language, unless where such signification is clearly opposed to truth. Moreover: to us it appears more worthy the character of the Creator, with whom “one day is as a thousand years,” to create, *at once*, a perfect universe, than to create such a universe, *piece-meal*, during the lapse of innumerable centuries. But, we have not time to dwell upon the subject.

But, whether this, or either of the other theories of creation, which we have considered, be the true one, the main facts are the same. According to all these theories, matter is not eternal, but was created by an Eternal Being. So, also, spirit was brought into existence by Him. He gave laws to both. By His wisdom was planned the complicated, but harmonious system of the heavens and the earth, and the innumerable forms of mineral, vegetable and animal existence, which adorn and people the waters and the dry land of our noble planet. And, as it was His wisdom which planned all these wonders, so it was His power, directly or indirectly exerted,

that called them all from nothing into existence. How vast such wisdom ! How inconceivably great such power ! Well might Paul and Barnabas claim for the Being, thus endowed, the exclusive worship of all rational creatures. Addressed to Him, how appropriate the adoring anthem of the heavenly hosts, as heard by the inspired John, in the desolate Island of his exile,—“Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty !” Amen ! Let all men, everywhere, respond, ‘Amen !’

DISCOURSE V.

OF THE CREATION OF MAN, AND OF HIS OBLIGATIONS TO THE CREATOR.

So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him : male and female created He them. And God blessed them.—Gen. i, 27, 28.

WE have now contemplated the origination of spirit and matter — the *material*, of the created universe, by the One self-existent Being. We have spoken of the laws established by the Creator for their regulation and government. We have also had under consideration the organizations, into which the Creator had disposed the Matter and Spirit, which He called into existence, in the formation of the heavens and the earth — particularly in the establishment of the Solar System. Our attention has been especially drawn to the Earth — its diversified surface, its complex revolutions and its embracing atmosphere; with its indefinitely varied productions and *animal* occupants. Here, we have seen combined beauty, grandeur and vast capabilities to minister enjoyment, to both sensuous and intellectual susceptibilities. But, thus far, no creature was upon Earth, who could appreciate the wisdom, the benevolence and the power displayed in the production of so fair a world — a habitation so well adapted to the endlessly varied creatures, who were to find their home, their subsistence and their enjoyment within its ample arrangements; or, who

could render, to the bounteous Provider, the homage and the gratitude which His munificence rendered Him justly entitled. Such a creature must have, in addition to animal instincts, appetites and passions, and to the low grade of intellect which is capable only of scanning and regulating the interests of the individual and the hour, a capacity to draw upon the facts and experience of the *past*, for instruction, in regard to the *present* and the *future* — to trace effects to their causes — to analyze complex subjects — to combine dissected parts into a symmetrical whole — and to reason, from abstract principles or propositions, to conclusions as clear and as reliable as ocular phenomena. He must, moreover, and especially, be able to perceive the *true*, the *right* and the *good*, *in morals*. He must be able to understand the source, the nature and the force of moral obligation; and, by the constitution of his nature, must be capable of moral performance. He must, consequently, be capable of knowing his Creator, of understanding the relation in which he stands to that Creator, the obligation, resulting from that relation, and the requirements, which are to regulate his conduct under that obligation, as they shall be made known to him, whether by permanent laws, or by isolated intimations of the Divine will. Such a creature, we repeat, did not exist among all the tribes of animated existence with which, as we have seen, God had peopled the waters, the air and the earth. But, the creation of Man supplied this important desideratum. Of this creation, we now proceed to speak; and, we shall consider,

I. The indications given by the Creator of the superior importance which He attached to the creation of man, over that of all other terrestrial creatures;

II. The nature, capabilities and character of man, when created;

III. The purpose of God, in the creation of man; and,

IV. The obligation of man to his Creator, resulting from the fact of his creation.

I. We are to consider, first, *The indications given by the Creator of the superior importance which He attached to the creation of man, over that of all other terrestrial creatures; and,*

1. In no other department of creation, have we any intimation that there was anything like Divine consultation or announcement of purpose. No preconcerted plan for the creation "of the heavens and the earth" is recorded — none for enwrapping the earth in the ample folds of the "firmament" or atmosphere — none for pervading the universe with the radiant splendors and all-revealing rays of "light" — none for "separating the waters and earth" of this terraqueous globe — none for clothing earth's surface with "grass, and herb, and tree;" whose verdure, and flowers, and fruits should minister to the pleasure and the subsistence of its sensuous and intellectual inhabitants — nor any for peopling the waters with myriad forms of life and capacities for enjoyment; for winging the air with forms of beauty and strength, with sweetness of note and splendor of plumage indefinitely varied, or for placing upon the earth itself, inhabitants innumerable, and endlessly diversified in form and capacity, from the most insignificant reptile, that winds its sordid way through the dust, to the noblest species of the mammalia, that proudly roam through the forest, free, fearless and independent. But, when man was to be created, the purpose was thus announced by God:—"Let us make man

in our image and after our likeness," said God. This, by the way, is by no means a slight confirmation of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Divine existence, elsewhere clearly taught by Revelation. This announcement, of the purpose to create man, in a manner to indicate that it was the result of consultation, on the part of the Divine Persons in the Godhead, exclusive, as it is, of every other step in the creative process, certainly indicates that, in the Divine estimation, the creation of man was of superior importance to that of any other portion of the stupendous work of creation.

2. In no other part of creation but that of man, have we any account of the *modus operandi*. We have only a simple statement of the fact that "God created," or that He said, "Let there be light"—"Let there be a firmament," etc. But the process of man's creation is described, not, it is true, with much particularity, but with sufficient to warrant a sacred writer in saying, "Thy hands have made me and fashioned me together round about." The account we have of the creation of man is as follows: "And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." And, "The Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept. He took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof. And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made He a woman." Thus was man, male and female, created by three several and distinct operations. His *body* was formed of the dust of the ground, *by the hands of God*. The breath of life was *breathed into his nostrils* and, from man, so formed and so animated, a part was taken, a rib, *of which was made a woman*. These facts are

abundantly sufficient, we think, to establish the affirmative of the proposition we have been considering, *viz.* that *the indications given by the Creator evince that He attached a superior importance to the creation of man, over that of all other terrestrial creatures*; and, we shall see that there was just ground for His attaching this superior importance to that creation, when we consider,

II. *The nature, capabilities and character of man, when he was created.* His nature was a complex nature, physical and spiritual,—spiritual in a sense far beyond and above the measure in which the nature of any of the inferior creatures may be regarded as spiritual.

(1.) Of the *physical* nature of man, we need say but little; as it differs, most probably, only in the laws of its peculiar organization, from the physical natures of other and inferior animals. Considered apart from the spirit of life, by which it is animated, it is simple *matter*, subject to all its laws and laboring under all its disabilities. Its organization is, however, a most interesting subject of investigation, as it not only is vastly curious, but displays in a striking manner, the wisdom and benevolent forecast of the Creator. But the scope of our design does not embrace the chemical, anatomical and physiological phenomena of the human frame. And, therefore, were we competent, as we certainly are not, to present an adequate representation of them, we should not consider ourselves warranted in doing so on the present occasion. We will remark, however, that with a speed vastly inferior to that of very many of the inferior creatures, and with equally inferior strength and personal means of defense and annoyance, to a great number of them, man, by the single organic advantage of a **hand**, under the guidance of a

superior intellect, is able to render the fleetness and strength of those creatures abortive, and often subservient to his own purposes. All inferior animals are provided by the organic law of their natures with suitable clothing for the climates in which they are respectively intended to have their habitations; while man, though thrown *naked* into the world, is enabled by the dexterity of this important member, to provide for himself clothing suited to any climate in which he may choose to take up his abode, or for transitions through the various climates on the face of the globe, in the most expeditious modes of travel, whether by land or water—whether impelled on his way by winds and currents, or by the power of steam, or even by the impulse of an agency still more energetic. By means of this member man is enabled to form and to use implements of industry, from a cambric needle to a steam engine of any required force; by which he can centuple his individual capability in any branch of profitable occupation, whether mechanical, mercantile or agricultural. Add to this, that by the *hand* are constructed and used the instruments whereby science is enabled to measure the earth, map the visible heavens, detect the existence of luminous bodies, far beyond the unassisted ken of the most sharp-sighted gazer upon the vaulted firmament extended above our earth, and to give body and permanence to the thoughts of the mind and to the words of the lips. This last achievement of the *hand* of man binds together the past, the present and the future; and renders each succeeding generation heir to all those which preceded it, in the most important and imperishable of all the advantages of which they could boast. Enough has been exhibited, we suppose, to render it evident that,

in the *hand*, man has an advantage, in physical organization, which places him vastly above all other animals.

Another important peculiarity, in the physical constitution of man, is the power of SPEECH. Most other animals can, indeed, by means of inarticulate sounds, communicate intelligibly, in a very few particulars; but, to man alone is given the power, by means of modulated sounds, to communicate whatever thought may be in his mind, to those with whom he is in conventional agreement in regard to the meaning attached to such sounds. Upon this depends, to a very great extent, the advantages and the enjoyments of society, and, especially, the increase of every species of knowledge. The discoveries, inventions and improvements of each individual become, by means of *speech*, the property of every individual in his society, who chooses to be at the trouble of appropriating it to himself; and, thus, every individual, of a society of twenty, one hundred or one thousand, may, in a given length of time, acquire all the knowledge of all the individuals composing that society: whereas, without communication by speech, the whole of that society would acquire less knowledge than the one-twentieth, one-hundredth or one-thousandth part of what has been acquired by every individual composing the society in which such communication exists. How immensely does this power or faculty elevate man above every other tribe of animated beings upon earth.

(2.) But, if advantages, in physical organization, establish the superiority of man over all other mundane creatures, his *spiritual*, *i. e.* his intellectual and moral nature and capacities exhibit that superiority still more eminently. We have, heretofore, intimated an opinion that spirit is a constituent in *all* animal existence, and that a measure of

intellect, in some exceedingly small certainly, belongs to them all. Thought and knowledge are predicable of intellect *only*; and, we know no class of animals, with sufficient intimacy to warrant us in pronouncing in regard to them, which does not evince a capability of thought and knowledge, in a greater or less degree. Still, the intellectual capabilities of man are so vastly superior to, and of such indefinitely wider range than those of the most favored tribes of inferior animals, that, in regard to intellect alone, man stands, not only at the head of all the creatures upon the earth, but upon an elevation vastly above them:— so much so, it is obviously the case, that many hastily conclude that, in this respect, there is nothing common to man and the inferior animals. In this judgment, we cannot concur. We think that we perceive, in these animals, as clear and as certain evidences of the existence of intellect as we do in man; but, in the strength of intellectual faculties and in the scope of their operation, man exceeds them indefinitely. While the intellectual faculties of the inferior animals, so far as we can perceive, are limited to what regards their present necessities and to their subordination to man, and, in respect even to these, are capable of exceedingly little improvement, there seems scarcely any attainable limit to the range or to the improvement of man's intellectual operations. We see no reason to believe that the inferior animals have any conception of mental or moral science, of mathematics or natural philosophy, of the useful or elegant arts. Man, on the contrary, finds, in these branches of intellectual operation, a congenial field of mental occupation. In them, he expatiates, not only with refined and elevated pleasure, but with a constant increase of intellectual strength and development.

As truth after truth is evolved by his investigation, he finds his mental capacity expanded and his strength of mind increased, for the acquisition of still more of the "treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

But, it is in the moral faculties of his spirit, that the true nobility of man's nature is seen. This is, we conceive, peculiar to man, among all the inhabitants of the earth. None of the inferior animals indicate any knowledge of the distinction between moral right and wrong — none of them evince any sense of moral obligation, or compunction for wrong committed. But, man has a clear perception of moral distinctions, as well regarding what relates to the state of his affections, as in what regards his conversation and conduct; and, he is able to apply those distinctions to the various relations which he sustains to his Creator, to his fellow-men and to inferior creatures. Moral *ability* was, equally with moral perception, an attribute of man's spiritual nature, in his original state. Had there been *any* constraint upon the actions of man, so that he could not freely and efficiently have determined his own course, such actions could not properly have been regarded as moral in their nature. This is readily conceded by *all*, in cases where the constraint is imposed by physical force. Yet, (but on what rational ground we cannot conceive,) moral constraint, equally invincible as physical could be, is, by *some* regarded as not effecting the moral character of an action, performed under it. Constraint, we suppose, no matter how or by what it is imposed, must, in the nature of the thing, destroy the moral character of the action which results from or is governed by it. Even in cases where such constraint is the consequence of habitual delinquency, the delinquent

will, we suppose, be held responsible rather for the delinquency whereby he has destroyed his moral agency, than for an action which he was *compelled* to perform, by the invincible evil tendency, to which he has subjected himself by such delinquency. For instance: Who would hold the confirmed *maniac* morally, any more than legally responsible for any crime, to which his insanity might impel him, even though that insanity were the direct result of criminal indulgence obstinately persisted in? And why would no one charge upon the perpetrator of an action, otherwise criminal, performed in such circumstances, either moral or legal guilt? Simply, we apprehend, because he was incapable of choosing, freely and efficiently, between right and wrong in the matter. All would justly condemn him for the criminal indulgence, by which he had destroyed his moral agency; though they could not hold him to be morally, any more than legally guilty, in the action which resulted from his having done so. That man was created a moral agent, and, therefore, that he was endued with freedom and efficiency of will, is manifest from the fact that his righteous Creator subjected him at once to moral government — enjoining on him abstinence from a specified indulgence, and denouncing against him a fearful penalty, in case of his disobedience to the injunction.

Man was in the image of his Divine Creator, when he came from the hands of that Creator. In what that image consisted, we have clear intimations in the writings of St. Paul. It was not impressed upon the form or features of his physical frame, but on the intellectual and moral faculties of his spirit. It consisted in *knowledge, righteousness and true holiness*. Of man's capacity for knowledge, to an extent whose limits have never yet been reached, we

have already spoken, as we also have of his capacity for righteousness and true holiness, in treating of the moral faculty with which he was endued by his Creator. But, we suppose, that more than mere capacity for these attributes is affirmed of man, when it is declared that he was created in the image of God. With what extent of *knowledge*, he came into existence, we have no means of determining; but there are clear intimations that it was very considerable, almost immediately after his creation. His primitive occupation, of *dressing the garden of Eden*, supposes him acquainted with horticulture — his reception of Eve, and his observations in regard to her, evince an acquaintance with her origin and his relation to her — his designation, by the Creator, to the task of giving names to inferior animals, would seem to imply a knowledge of their respective natures and habitudes; — and, from the fact that moral duty was enjoined upon him, without any known previous instruction, in regard to moral obligation, it would appear that he possessed this most important of all the kinds of knowledge of which man is capable. This implies a knowledge of God, of the relation subsisting between the Creator and the creature, and the obligation upon the creature, growing out of that relation.

As knowledge, as well as the capacity to know, was a part of the image of God, in which man was created, so righteousness and true holiness, as well as a capacity for them, entered into its composition. *True holiness* consists in the absence of all moral evil, as well in the tendencies of the affections and passions, as in the conduct and conversation of the person of whom it is predicated. It is perfect innocence — immaculate purity. And, such, if

man was created in the image of God, was his moral state. There was not only no moral evil in him, but no tendency, no bias to such evil. There *was* a capability of such evil — without such capability he could not have been a moral agent.

Righteousness, as well as true holiness, formed a striking feature in the image of God, in which man was created. As true holiness is the absence of all moral evil, so righteousness, in its strict import, implies the right direction of all the moral tendencies, and the exact and constant performance of every incumbent duty, whether to other creatures, or to the Creator Himself. All this is implied in righteousness, as the term, in its proper and complete signification, implies both *being* and *doing* right in all things and at all times. How long man continued in this state of purity and rectitude, we have no means of knowing; but, we are warranted in affirming that he was created in it, and might have continued in it forever.

Another lineament of the Divine image, in which man was created, was, we think, *immortality*. The immortality of his spiritual part is disputed by comparatively few, whether infidels, Jews or Christians. But, we carry our views on this subject still farther, and believe that, had man continued faithful to his obligations to his Maker, he would never have died. To this opinion, many, who receive the Scriptures as revealed truth, do not subscribe. Two principal objections, which have been urged against it, we shall notice.

1. It is contended that in all physical organizations there is a tendency to dissolution, and that this is especially evident in the case of animal organization. That this is the case, in the *present* condition of things, is

readily conceded; but, to argue from the present laws of animal life to what obtained while man was in a state of primeval perfection, is manifestly a begging of the whole question. If man, as we suppose, was rendered mortal by sin, it follows, by necessary consequence, that those tendencies to mortality, which are now found in his animal organization, were produced by the same fatal agency. And, besides, we have, as we think, decisive indications in the laws of animal life, even in its present impaired condition, that the tendency in it to dissolution is not an original and a *necessary* tendency, but incidental to it, from some agency which has deranged its original constitution. For a great proportion of life, the conservative principle, in the animal organization, is sufficient, not merely to prevent a speedy dissolution, or to prevent any sensible waste of its energy, but, can and does secure a constant increment of the powers of life. And if this, in present circumstances, can be performed for twenty, thirty, or forty years, who shall say that, in the undisordered condition in which man was created, it might not and would not have been performed forever? That there is *now* a tendency to dissolution, in the physical constitution of man, is unquestionable; but, that it is not an original and a necessary tendency appears to us evident from the fact that, whenever it is rendered apparent, it is accompanied by pain,—a sure indication, we apprehend, that the tendency is a disturbance of the native and proper operation of the organism affected by it. Combining these two facts—that the tendency to death or dissolution is manifestly a disturbance of the laws of animal life, and that the conservative principle in the animal economy is able, for many years together, not only to prevent deterioration,

but even to bring increase of vigor to all the functions of life, we are led to the conclusion that there is really no force in the argument against our position, drawn from the existing tendency in the physical organization of man to dissolution.

2. It is objected to our doctrine, that, if man had been immortal in his present organization, and if, as was manifestly intended by the Creator, the human race had been propagated, in successive generations, as is now the case, the earth in time would have been so crowded with inhabitants that there would have been no room for farther increase; and that, by such means, myriads must have been withheld from existence, who otherwise might have come into being, with the assurance of spiritual immortality. There would be much force in this objection, were the Creator restrained to death as the only mode of removing man from earth to another scene of existence. But, as if to meet this objection, He has shown that He is not so restrained; but, that, from among the death-doomed family of fallen man, even He can, when He chooses, convey the righteous, *without their tasting death*, to the abodes of the blessed. This, He *has done* in the cases of Enoch and Elijah; and this, the apostle assures us, He *will do*, in the case of those "who are alive and remain at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." We suppose that, had not "sin entered into the world, and death by sin," every individual and generation of man, when the purpose for which they were placed upon earth should have been accomplished, would pass into the heavens, without the experience of death, as did Enoch and Elijah. If so, there would have been no greater

danger, that the earth should be over-crowded, than there is in the present state of things.

Having thus disposed of the main objections, which are urged against the opinion we have advanced, we now remark that we consider that opinion fully authorized by the Sacred Scriptures. Had man been liable to death, in his primeval state, there would have been a manifest absurdity in making death the penalty of violating the law of probation given to him. But, it is contended that it was not the death in question which was the penalty denounced against such violation, but spiritual death or the separation of the soul from God. We readily allow that spiritual death was a constituent in the death threatened against transgression; but, we are thoroughly convinced that physical death was equally so. This we shall have occasion in a future discourse to consider more at length, and therefore, shall pursue it no farther at this time. Believing, then, that physical as well as spiritual death was the penalty denounced against the transgression of the law given to our first parents, we feel warranted in concluding that man was created immortal—in other words, that he would never have died, had he never sinned.

Once more: man was created in the image of God, in that he was *happy*. Of the infinite happiness of God, no one can entertain a doubt; and, a very slight consideration of the physical and moral condition, and the external relations of man, in his primitive state, renders his perfect happiness equally unquestionable. His physical condition was one of accurately adjusted means to the ends to be accomplished—appetites, the indulgence of which would, while it afforded him pleasure, be conducive to his well-

being—powers, commensurate to the demands of his condition—senses connecting him with the world external to himself; and all these healthful and regulated in such exactness as that there was in them no excess, no defectiveness. His moral condition was, as we have seen, one of unsullied purity and of unbending rectitude. Hence, there was no place for self-reproach—none for apprehension of Divine displeasure. Self-estimation was unqualified self-approval, and the smile of God was assured on the high ground of its being deserved. His external relations, whether to God, to his fellow-creatures, to inferior animals or to all nature and all duration, were relations of peace, of security and of advantage. The complicated machinery of nature's laws could educe no evil to him. The evil spirit, how great soever his malignity might be, could work him no harm, so long as he should preserve his purity and rectitude, and the ministry of all good spirits, even of the highest, would be constantly conducive to his felicity.

May we not from what has been seen, of the *nature, capabilities and character of man when created*, fairly conclude that our first point, viz: *that the Creator attached to the creation of man a greater degree of importance than He did to the creation of all other terrestrial beings*; and that in doing so, He was guided by a just appreciation of man and of those other creatures, is fully established? We certainly think so. Variety, beauty and splendor are found in other terrestrial productions of creative skill and power; but in man, to a high order of physical excellence is added superior intellectual capabilities, moral sense and moral power, originally free from all bias to wrong, and a capacity for happiness, which, in his primeval state, was

met with an adequate supply of means. And, his happiness thus provided for, might and would have been uninterrupted and unending had he not abused his moral power in transgressing the laws of his Creator. We proceed now to consider,

III. *The purpose of God in the creation of man;* and,

1. We suppose it was the purpose of God in the creation of man to provide a *representative of himself upon earth*. This, we think, is implied in the fact that He “created man in His own likeness and image.” Would it, we would ask, have corresponded to the wisdom of the Creator to produce a world, so vast and various as this, without one race of beings capable of reflecting the character and representing the dignity of the Creator? We think not. And we find, accordingly, that man in intellectual capabilities and in moral powers, was qualified to serve these important purposes: the *former*, by enabling man to understand the works of the Creator—to analyze the laws impressed upon matter, and the peculiar laws of each organic existence—to trace out and appreciate the skill, the foresight and the strict regard to utility with which these laws are adapted to the purposes contemplated in the productions of creation; to group the whole of these productions, and to codify the whole of these laws, into systems of stupendous magnitude and unjarring harmony, have qualified him to display the wisdom and benevolence, as well as the power of the Creator; while the *latter*, by means of moral perception and power of moral action, enabled man in his own character, to present a true, though faint representation of the holiness, the truth and the justice of the Divine character. All this man was, at least in his primeval state, well fitted to accomplish; and,

as such, was qualified to serve as a representative of his Creator in the world in which he was placed.

Again : in the *dominion*, over other mundane creatures, which was explicitly and formally delegated to man, by the Creator, he was legally constituted the vicegerent of the Creator—the representative of His authority upon earth. To this high office, he was admirably fitted, by his superior intelligence, his ability to multiply indefinitely the resources of his personal condition, and, especially, by the social combinations, into which he could enter for the accomplishment of purposes important to his race. For this he was originally qualified, by the moral rectitude of his nature, in which there was an ample guarantee that the dominion which his superior intelligence, multiplied resources and social combination should enable him to maintain, over inferior creatures, would not be exercised in cruelty or oppression—nay, that its exercise would be positively conducive to the well-being of the creatures subjected to it.

Once more : Man was constituted the representative of his Creator on earth, by the *happiness* of his original state. With a physical organization, in which no part was lacking, none in disorder, all operating healthfully and harmoniously—with a mind unclouded, unperturbed and clear-sighted—with affections pure, temperate and rightly directed—with a “conscience void of offence towards God,” and towards all creatures—with sensible communion with God, and His unqualified approval—how could man be otherwise than perfectly happy; especially as he was, in addition to all these great advantages, associated with a companion, who was every way a suitable help to him, in the enjoyment of Eden, the garden of

delight! And, in all this happiness, he was guaranteed immutably, so long as he should maintain unbroken his fealty to his bounteous Creator and rightful Sovereign.

Finally: Man was the representative of his Creator's *immortality*. This, like all the rest, was derived and forfeitable; but, this, any more than the other peculiar advantages, with which he was endowed by his Creator, *need not* have been lost by man. There was, in him, no latent disease, no distemperature of blood, which climate or food would develop in the course of time—no tendency to decay or dissolution through age or the wear and friction of organic action—no fatal decree, appointing and dooming the unoffending creature to the bitter pains of death. To unfallen man, we may appropriate, as the purpose of God towards him, what the Saviour affirmed of His disciples—"Because I live, ye shall live also." Had man continued in obedience, we scruple not to say, that never would the death-struggle have wrung a groan from a human bosom—never the death-wail have ascended from a human habitation. In man, would have been seen a constant type of Divine immortality.

The purpose of God, in creating man, was, in accordance with the views just presented, that "man should glorify his Creator, and enjoy Him forever." For this, as we have seen above, he was not only endowed with the amplest personal qualifications, but was placed in the most favorable circumstances that could have been thrown around him. He had intelligence to understand and appreciate the Divine perfections displayed to him, whether by means of creation and providence, or communicated directly by revelation. He had moral perception to apprehend the pure and the good, the true and the just in char-

acter, and his social powers qualified him to communicate to other intelligent beings, his impressions of the wisdom, the power and the goodness, the purity, the truth and the justice of the Everliving Creator of all things. His elevated position, at the head of earth's myriad tribes, and as the representative and vicegerent of the Sovereign Creator, gave a weight and an authority to his impressions and utterances, which, in other circumstances, would not have been conceded to them. Hence, it was eminently in his power to "glorify God." And, with perfect health of body, serenity of mind, purity of heart and an approving conscience, all ministering to an aptitude for enjoyment, he was capable of "enjoying God," in the contemplation of His works, in the investigation of His superintending providence, in the appropriation of His various bounty, in the smile of His approbation and in high and holy communion with Him. And, in his immortality, (dependent only on his fidelity,) he had a sure guarantee of the perpetuity of his inestimable privilege — to "enjoy God forever."

Allowing it to have been the purpose of God, in the creation of man, to constitute him His representative on earth, with the ultimate intention that, in that character, he should "glorify his Creator and enjoy Him forever;" and that, to secure this result, He endowed man with intellectual and moral capabilities and with susceptibilities such as we have indicated, was not the purpose of that creation worthy the Creator? And, was not man's creation, with such capabilities and susceptibilities, and for such a purpose, a boon to man of inestimable value? Let it not be urged that the *possibility* that man should forfeit, by dereliction of sacred obligation, his high position

and his perfect felicity, renders his creation a doubtful benefit. *That possibility* was, in fact, indispensable to his high position and to his perfect happiness; as, without it, he could not have been a moral agent—could not have been *man*. We, now, proceed to consider,

IV. The obligation of man to his Creator, resulting from the fact of his Creation.

It is a principle, universally admitted, we believe, that the inventor and producer have an absolute right to the use of their productions. If this principle be correct, in a case where the materials, of which such production is constructed, are already in existence, and where the laws of its formation are already in operation, so that the producer has only to select the proper materials and place them under the operation of the appropriate laws, in order to the existence of the production to which he lays his universally-admitted claim, how much more manifestly does it hold good in a case of proper creation, where the producer not only forms the organization, but also furnishes the materials employed, and originates the laws upon which its construction is formed? Thus did God, in the creation of man. Both the matter and the spirit, which enter into the composition of man, were produced by his Creator. Every law, which operates in his organization, whether upon his body or his mind, proceeds from the same great Source of his being. These laws were adjusted, in his organization, to the production of the result obtained, by the same wise and powerful Artificer. In the highest possible sense, God was the Inventor and Producer of man; and, He, therefore, has an unquestionable and absolute right to the use of man. From this, it results, by direct consequence, that man, who was rendered capable of such

service by his mental and moral constitution, is under the most binding obligation to be voluntarily subject, in all things and at all times, to the will of God. Whatever God shall see proper to require of him, whether in the employment of his physical powers, or in the direction of his mental operations or moral affections, is indispensably obligatory upon him. He can have no right to demand either abatement or change in such requirements, nor, on any account, to act contrary to them. Let it not be objected that this is slavery to absolute despotism. If the right of the despot is unquestionable, there can be nothing base in the slavery which is its correlative. And if the despot be wise, and benevolent, just and unchangeable, no relation could be happier, to a dependent being, than would be subjection to such a ruler. The right of God, to absolute sovereignty over man is indisputable; and, who will deny to Him those qualities which would render His absolute rule a blessing to those in subjection to it? He is too independent — too infinitely exalted above the possibility of reaping any advantage from the oppression of His subjects, to have any motive to oppress them. He has wisdom to understand what is just to them, and righteousness to mete it out to them. He knows what will be for their advantage; and His benevolence will pursue the course which will lead to that result. And, His power is ample to supply their wants, and protect them against enemies. In short, He is such a Sovereign, so ample in His rights of sovereignty, and so infinitely qualified to rule well and for the advantage of His subjects, that no creature, how high soever his position among creatures, could, in the least, abase himself by absolute submission to Him; and greater happiness would result

from such submission, than from entire independence on His authority.

Such, then, was the obligation of man to his Creator, resulting from the fact of his creation. His body and his spirit, his time and his talents were to be voluntarily *devoted* to the doing of the will of his Creator, without question and without a murmur. What He should forbid, must be avoided—what He commanded, must be performed promptly, faithfully, cheerfully. It was not for man to ask, in regard to any requirement of God, ‘Is this necessary, is this in accordance with the fitness of things?’ nor to say, ‘This is a hard saying;’ but, it is for him to accredit the wisdom, the goodness and the righteousness of God, by an instant, a hearty and cheerful conformity to such requirement. Thus, *faith, love and obedience* were, originally, as they are under the Christian dispensation, the sum of all duty—the essential characteristics of man’s obligation to God. And, *now*, as *then*, the well-being of man, both in time and in eternity, is dependent upon fidelity to this obligation. Accordingly, while man continued faithful to his obligation, his happiness was perfect—his “joy was unspeakable and full of glory,” and, thus, it might have continued forever.

DISCOURSE VI.

THE ORIGIN AND CHARACTER OF THE DEVIL, AND HIS ENMITY TO MAN.

The Devil sinneth from the beginning.—1 John iii, 18.

IN our former Discourses, we have contemplated the character of two of the principal actors in the drama of human existence — God and Man — the *latter*, in his primitive state of innocence and happiness. These characters present only that which is pleasing. In them, we see only that which is holy, just and good. In them, is seen the union of mental excellence with moral perfection, in the highest degree of which their natures respectively were capable. From the contemplation of objects, so engagingly beautiful, it is now necessary to withdraw our minds, and to direct our attention to a being of a quite different character; — one in whom great intellectual powers are associated with the worst moral qualities — one in whom there is no infusion of good, to rectify the virulence of concentrated evil — one absolutely wicked in nature, and industriously and indefatigably employed in accomplishing designs corresponding to the depravity of that nature — a being irreconcilable in his enmity to God; who, without temptation, from without himself, and without precedent in all the ages of eternity, abusing the liberty with which he, as a moral agent, was endowed by his Creator, and in violation of the obligation he was under to that

Benevolent Author of all the good he enjoys, became a rebel against the Divine Government, and has continued, as the text informs us, to pursue his rebellious course, with untiring perseverance, to the present time.

By the word, "beginning," we are not to understand either the beginning of time, or the beginning of the Devil's existence, but the beginning of his transgression, which was, in fact, the origin of sin, the commencement of all evil, moral and physical, in the universe. And the idea intended to be conveyed by the text, is the unrelenting perverseness of this evil spirit. From the first moment of his apostasy to this day, he has set himself to counteract the designs of God, and to hinder or destroy the virtue, and, consequently, the happiness of other creatures. Man, especially, is exposed to his cruel attacks; and, by his having yielded to and been overcome by him, man has weakened his own means of defense, and rendered his malignant enemy the more confident of success in his mischievous attempts. It is, therefore, of very great importance that we should be brought into such acquaintance with the character and designs of this formidable and malignant adversary, as to be prepared to guard ourselves against his mischievous practices against us. This is spoken of, as important, by St. Paul, when he says, speaking of the Devil, "We are not ignorant of his devices." To contribute to this acquaintance, we design, in discoursing on the text, to consider,

- I. Some of the evidences we have of the existence of the Devil;
- II. His origin;
- III. His character; and,
- IV. His enmity to man.

I. WE are to consider *some of the evidences we have of the existence of the Devil.*

1. The *common sense* of mankind, unequivocally asserts the existence of an Evil being or of evil beings, whose object and aim are to prevent good to the utmost of their power, and to destroy it wherever it exists. In all systems of natural religion, whether refined or gross; in every nation, whether savage or civilized, whatever difference may exist, as to his origin, rank or power, such a being is supposed to exist; and to exist in the same evil character, and with the same malignant hostility to all that is good. The Manichean system, which arrayed divinity against itself, dividing the power of deity between the Evil and the Good, gave but an exaggerated importance to the Evil being, whose success in perverting man, and in counterworking the benevolent purposes of the Deity, through the unconstrained moral agency of man, might readily enough lead astray the speculations of human philosophy, unguided by revelation, to the Manichean conclusion, that the Evil is equal to the Good in the Divine nature and government. The Manichean doctrine differs but little from the opinion which is, we suppose, common to most savage nations — it obtains, at least, among the aboriginal inhabitants of this continent: 'That there are two equal and eternal beings: the one Good, and the author of all good — the other Evil, and the author of all evil.' These two deities, they imagine to be in eternal opposition to each other, and constantly employed in endeavors to thwart each other's designs; and that, when one prevails over the other, it is some adventitious circumstance, or some peculiar activity, which secures the ascendancy obtained. The Greeks and Romans, imagined the uni-

verse divided into three vast Empires, the Celestial, the Aquatic and the Infernal, and over each of these, a supreme deity. He, to whom their opinion assigned the Infernal Empire, is represented as a gloomy, a malignant and an inexorable being, who shunned the light of heaven and surrounded himself with horrors unalterable and inconceivable by mortals. All the inferior powers, who exercised authority in this dreary empire of darkness, were beings of like character with their hideous chief. Gorgons and the Furies, Hecate and Ate, were distinguished personages in the court of the infernal monarch, and are represented in the most frightful colors in which the imagination of man could portray them. Whenever any of these subterranean divinities are said to visit the regions of the upper air, it is for some malign purpose — some purpose affronting to other divinities, or mischievous to the proper inhabitants of those regions. Vice and misery, discord and destruction, mark the footsteps of these foes to order and happiness, wherever they go. There was little need, certainly, in the system of Mythology, common to these two nations, lettered and refined as they were, for any divine agency exclusively wicked; inasmuch as every deity, in the immense multitude which flourished in their fruitful imagination, was sufficiently prepared, when occasion served, to act the part of the devil in a high style of perfection. The most unblamable among those gods were often so abandoned in their manners and so profligate in their morals, as that it would have disgraced the meanest and worst of their worshipers to resemble them. Lust, envy, ambition, falsehood, treachery and cruelty were as prevalent in the court, and even in the bosom of Jupiter, as they are commonly found in the courts of earthly

princes. Yet, notwithstanding the great, but partial, wickedness of their better deities, which rendered them a pretty just copy of human nature, something suggested to those sharp-sighted and philosophical investigators of moral phenomena, the necessity for the existence of a being or class of beings, with an immense preponderance of evil in their natures, if they were not absolutely evil, to account for much that occurs in the operations and experience of the moral world. Men, versed in the history of human experience, as these Grecian and Roman sages were, would feel the force of this necessity; and, in framing a system of religion, by the light of their own experience and observation on the phenomena of human life, would find a place in that system for a being absolutely and inevitably wicked — such as are their Pluto and his subordinate divinities, and such as are the Devil and his angels of scripture representation. The Greeks and Romans were men; and they participated in that dictate of common-sense which we are now considering. The Persians and the Mahometans declare that there is but one God; but they suppose that there are two descriptions of beings, of a nature superior to that of man, the one good and the other evil; and, to the former, they give the name of good, and to the latter, the name of evil genii. It is, as they believe, the business of the evil genii to corrupt the manners, debauch the morals and disturb the peace of mankind; in other words, as far as they may, to extirpate good and establish evil.

From all this, it appears that men, in the most entirely different circumstances, with prejudices as various as those circumstances, and with every degree of intellectual improvement, from the barbarian to the learned scholar

and profound philosopher, have believed in the existence of a spiritual being, or of spiritual beings, wicked and malignant, whose business it is to oppose whatever tends to virtue or happiness among men. This universal agreement, though it does not *establish* the doctrine for which we are now contending, does render it highly probable. And the probability is strengthened by this circumstance — that, though all men agree as to the simple fact of the existence of such a being, each arrays him in the habit and assigns him the rank and manners which correspond to his own particular circumstances. It will not weaken the force of this argument, that many people have conceived the most improbable and absurd superstitions in regard to this being; for those superstitions could not be more absurd or improbable than those which have been embraced concerning the Great First Cause Himself. We would not be understood to say, that the evidence of the existence of an evil being is equally strong and clear with that which proves the existence of God; but we do say, that the common-sense of mankind affirms the one as well as the other; and the same argument that will weaken the force of this evidence in the one case, will weaken it in the other. The common-sense of mankind, when it can be fairly ascertained, furnishes an argument of such weight as to render extremely probable anything which cannot be proved to be false by experiment or demonstration; and, as we conceive that we have made it appear that this doctrine is supported by that authority, we feel fully justified in concluding that it is probable there is a Devil.

2. The individual experience of every man will furnish to himself strong, if not irresistible evidence of the exist-

ence of an evil being. It will readily occur to every one that we do not mean to say that the Devil has been an object of sense to every man. What power a disembodied spirit may have of rendering itself visible or tangible to man, is not an object of present inquiry; but, we know that spiritual beings are ordinarily known to exist only by the effects they produce. Even the Omnipresent Being, who superintends the various operations of providence, can be recognized only in His works. This being understood, let any man attentively examine into the operations of his own soul, and he will find, we are persuaded, convincing evidence that an evil agency is employed, in machinations to pervert his morals and disquiet his mind. He will find, it is true, much of the evil, of which he is conscious, to arise from the depravity of his own nature. But, when this is the case, the operation will be according to the laws of mental operation generally. He will be able to connect those evil emotions which arise from himself with something which has gone before, or with some circumstance which, by the laws of association, has called them into action; or, he will be able to trace them to some appetite, passion or habit congenial to the emotion which he feels, to which he is subject. But, besides these native tendencies, arising out of his depravity, suggested by association or resulting from previous influences exerted upon him, he will often be sensible of evil thoughts, evil passions and temptations to wickedness which are entirely insulated—having no precedents in his experience, no relation to kindred circumstances in his condition, no congenial source in his own heart or habits. Whence could these proceed? They are not the result of sensation, reflection or association.

The natural, we think inevitable, conclusion is that they proceed from some being, of like character with the suggestion obtruded, who is able to address the mind *directly*, without having recourse to the ordinary means of communicating ideas, by operating on the senses, exciting reflection or rousing a train of associated ideas. How often is it the case, that, when the mind is unusually tranquil and disposed to serious reflection and devout exercises, the most profane, loose and wicked images are violently urged upon it! In such cases, the whole soul is often seen to shrink with disgust and horror, and to strain every energy to the utmost, till the abominable idea is expelled. Can we suppose, then, that these shocking suggestions proceed from the mind itself? And, if they do not, then, the conclusion results necessarily that every man, who is conscious of this kind of mental exercise, has a decisive argument in his own experience for the existence of this evil being.

3. The third and last evidence we shall examine, on this subject, is the Sacred Volume. Proof, clearly derived from this source, must, with Christians, be decisive of any question. Probability, established by the common consent of mankind, in circumstances the most diversified, might possibly be set aside by stronger probabilities; and experience of diabolical influence might be explained away, or, at least, mystified, by the ingenuity of metaphysical sophistry; but, the explicit language of the Sacred Scriptures places any point, in regard to which it bears testimony, beyond all allowable controversy, with those who receive those Scriptures as the repositories of Divine teaching. Here, then, we shall rest the fate of the question now under discussion. If these Divine oracles

unequivocally affirm the personal existence of the Devil, we shall disregard all efforts to discredit the fact; whether those efforts take the form of sneering ridicule, mythical exposition or grave philosophical argument. We fear no error, under the plain guidance of this infallible instructor —led by the others, we know, men have been most egregiously stultified.

But, amid such a multitude of testimonies, full to the purpose, as are to be found on the sacred pages, we find it exceedingly difficult to make a selection of such as will not appear less appropriate than others which are neglected. Almost every portion of the sacred volume contains notices of that evil being—some direct and unequivocal, others indicating his existence and operation, rather than directly and explicitly declaring them as historical facts. Of this latter kind, is the first intimation we have of the existence of the Devil, and of his enmity to mankind. To suppose that the serpent or the ape, or, indeed, any other of the inferior animals, was the *proper* tempter of the woman, to the primal offence, is so grossly absurd that we presume no man in his senses is capable of doing it. And, to find, in the tempter, a mythical representation of the propensities existing in the woman herself, is to contradict the whole scope of the incident described; as it would suppose the woman already a rebel at heart, instead of being tempted to a first departure from innocence. The serpent was, *instrumentally*, the tempter of Eve: but, what, save the influence of an Evil Intelligence could have prompted, or, more properly, used the serpent in the business of the temptation? That the Devil is afterwards denominated, in Holy Writ, the “Old Serpent,” clearly enough, we think, intimates his agency in this infernal transaction.

Satan, or the Devil, acts a very conspicuous part in the melancholy tragedy of Job's family. Whatever of poetry there may be in the style of narrating this remarkable history of an eminently good man, thus much is plain, prosaic fact. The agent, in the misfortunes of Job, was an intelligent, active, powerful and malignant being—prompt to inflict the most cruel outrages upon Job, which the control of a Superior Power did not prevent him from inflicting. That this malignant adversary was not a man, is evident from the instrumentalities he employed in his hostility to Job. Not only were the bands of Chaldeans, whom, indeed, a man might have stimulated to the foray, let loose against the property of Job, but, the winds and the lightning were brought to wreak their elemental fury upon his possessions and his children; while disease, in a most painful and loathsome form, was inflicted upon his own person by his fell adversary. The employment of these instrumentalities for the “affliction of Job,” was beyond the power of a human adversary; but we are assured that they were employed by Satan; therefore, the Satan who persecuted Job was superior in power to man.

The New Testament almost opens with an account of the fell purpose and a most vigorous, though abortive effort of the Devil, to blast the hope of salvation to mankind, in the bud. Hungry, through a *fast* of forty days and forty nights, alone in a dreary desert, the Blessed Saviour was assailed by the Devil, in a series of temptations, cunningly accommodated to the condition, the piety and the noble aspirations of his subject. To satisfy His hunger, He was admonished to work a miracle, by changing stones into bread—to show his confidence in God, He

was prompted to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the temple—a sheer descent of some three hundred feet—with the assurance, from Scripture too, that, if He were the Son of God, He should be so upborne by angels, that He should not even “dash His foot against a stone.” To secure universal Empire among men, He is invited to render homage to the “prince of the power of the air, the spirit which now worketh in the children of disobedience.” Who will hazard his reputation, by ascribing these temptations to the Saviour’s own impatience under the cravings of appetite; to His fanatical confidence, in Divine protection to the presumptuous, and to His grasping ambition for power? The tempter exerted powers far beyond those possessed by man—in placing Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple, and on an exceedingly high mountain, and in exhibiting to Him, *in a moment of time*, a panoramic view of all the Kingdoms of the world, with all their glory. The tenor of the history renders it probable that only a few hours—perhaps minutes—were occupied in the presentation and repulsion of *all* these temptations. The whole narrative, then, is mere fiction, or the tempter was an Evil Intelligence, vastly superior in power to human beings. Elsewhere, in the Sacred writings, we are warned to be on our guard against the wiles of the Devil—commanded to “resist the Devil, steadfast in the faith;” with the assurance, that, being so resisted, “he will flee from us.” And, we are informed that “he goeth about, as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.”

These, and numberless other passages of the Holy Scriptures, plainly affirm, or strongly intimate the existence of the Devil; and, the only alternative left, to those

who receive the Scriptures as a revelation from God, and deny the personal existence of the Devil, is to construe as allegorical, the various notices of him, in which the Scriptures abound. But, as there is no authority or need for such a construction, we might just as reasonably consider the whole Sacred volume an allegory; and the God, revealed in that volume, an allegorical personage. What is said of the Devil, in the Bible, is applicable to a real existence, and only to such an existence; and, there is not, in any part of that Book, the slightest intimation that it is to be otherwise understood. And, in fact, to keep in countenance the supposition, that the Devil is an allegorical personage, the rudest violence must be done to the signification of language, to the dictates of common-sense and to the established rules of sound and rational criticism. Every landmark, that separates truth and history from falsehood and fiction, must be broken down and removed. But, allowing the Devil to be an allegorical personage, what, we ask, does he represent? The design of an allegory is, by means of persons and incidents familiar to the mind, to render easy of apprehension somewhat that lies remote from common observation, or which is too stupendous to be contemplated in its own native form of greatness and grandeur: or, the design is to veil the exhibition of revolting and repulsive representation, under appearances which, though they intimate the truth to be represented, yet do not expose its most disagreeable features in a strong and clear light: or, the design is to enliven and render captivating to the imagination some dry abstraction, by giving to its exhibition dramatic life and character. We again ask: 'What is represented by the Devil, if he be merely an allegorical personage?' We can conceive of ne

possible answer to this question; unless it be that human depravity, either in the individual himself who is tempted, or in the mass of human beings with whom the tempted party is associated, be what is so represented. But, that it is neither individual nor social depravity that is represented by the Devil, as an allegorical personage, is manifest beyond all question or doubt, since individual and social depravity are mentioned in connection with the Devil, and clearly discriminated from him, in the same representation of the opponents with which man has to contend in a life of piety. It is well known that by the phrase, *THE FLESH*, in Scripture language, we are to understand the aggregate of human depravity. If any doubt this, let him read *Gal. v, 19-21*, where many of the vices to which man is addicted are characterized as “*the works of the flesh*.” “*The world*,” in the language of Scripture, expresses the aggregate of the men who are alien from God, under the dominion of the flesh, or subject to the depravity of nature, engendered by the original transgression. Now, the Devil is associated with the *flesh*, both in its individual, and in its social capacity, as the adversary of piety, and is clearly enough distinguished from it, in both capacities. In *Ephes. vi, 11, 12*, the Apostle says: “Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the Devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high *places*.” There is nothing in the *original* for *places*; and, we suppose, it ought not to have been supplied — nay, that its supposititious existence in the text, has tended to mislead the reader. The contestants here exhibited, as arrayed against the Christian, are

“flesh and blood,” nature in her fallen state, or individual depravity—“the rulers of the darkness of this world,” the dominating influence of evil in the world — “spiritual wickedness, in high *places*,” of great power, of super-human influence and resources. Here, we conceive, “the flesh,” *human depravity* — the world, and the Devil, are represented as intimately associated, in the same mischievous enterprise against man; at the same time, that they are carefully distinguished from one another. The two former foes of man, however distinct in their proper existence, are subordinate to the Devil — their measures of hostility against man, are “wiles of the Devil.” *He* is the arch-enemy — *they* are *his* subalterns.

These evidences, of the existence of an evil being, spiritual in his nature and possessed of vast power and resources, called in the sacred Scriptures, “The Devil”—these evidences, we say, furnished by the common consent of mankind, by the experience of individuals, and by the Word of God, appear to us conclusive and irresistible. Satisfied of this, we shall now proceed,

II. To inquire after the *origin* of this Evil Being. Of this, we can know no more than Infinite Wisdom has seen proper to reveal to us. There was no way by which man could become acquainted, to any extent, with the secrets of the invisible world, but by information which should be communicated by an inhabitant, or by inhabitants of that world. And it does not appear that any of these inhabitants will communicate (perhaps they *may not* communicate) what belongs to their state, without a commission from Him, who is Sovereign Ruler of all worlds. In the word of God, we are taught that “all His works are done in truth,” i. e. according to the strictest justice and rectitude. Hence,

the inference is natural and *necessary*, that He never created any being evil, or a being with a *fatal* tendency to become evil. This doctrine, and the inference that results so obviously from it, accord with the clearest dictates of reason and common-sense; and put it beyond reasonable dispute, that the Devil, such as he is at present, could not be the production of God's creating hand. It is generally received, as an *axiom* in philosophical reasonings, that there can be *but one* eternal, self-existent being in the universe; and this, the Scriptures put beyond question, by assuring us that "God created all things in heaven and upon earth, visible and invisible; whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers." Consequently, the Devil, considered merely as an existence, is the creature of God. The question which remains to be considered is this: 'If the Devil be the creature of God; if God could not create an evil being, or a being with a *fatal* tendency to become evil, and if the Devil be now an evil being, how did he become what he is?' The answer to this question must, if obtained at all, be derived from Divine Revelation. There is no other source whence it can be drawn by man. In that repository of truth, we find it recorded that there were some of the angels—pure celestial spirits, who "kept not their first estate," who "sinned," or transgressed the law of their Creator. Among these rebel spirits, it is reasonable to suppose that there was a leader, an arch-traitor, whose superior art, official influence or authority contributed to turn the rest from their allegiance to their proper Sovereign. This supposition is countenanced, nay, we think, fully borne out, by the classification of the rebel hosts of darkness, as "The Devil and his angels." The leader and arch-

traitor, in the primitive rebellion, we suppose to be the person distinguished by the appellative, "The Devil," by which the prime mover of evil among men, the embodiment of all wickedness, is distinguished in the Sacred Writings.

This evil and malignant being, having been created, as, consistently with the Divine character, he must have been created, pure, and good, and upright, curiosity will prompt the inquiry, 'What could there have been to engender evil in such a being? What was there, either within or without himself, to seduce him into rebellion against his beneficent Creator, from whom he had received only kindness? With no bias to evil in his own nature, no precedent wickedness in the universe, to influence him by the force of example, no lack of means for enjoyment, probably no superior *creature*-greatness, to excite envy or inflame ambition, what motive could have impelled him to the evil choice he embraced?' These questions all proceed upon the false, unphilosophical supposition that the determinations of a free moral agent *must* have *motives* to produce them—a supposition as inconsistent with free moral agency, as that of either physical constraint or Divine coercion. The power to will either right or wrong, without extraneous control or influence, is indispensable to free moral agency; and, therefore, any *necessary* dependence of volition on *motive-influence*, is utterly inconsistent with such agency. It is idle, therefore, to inquire after those motives by which a pure and upright spirit of heaven was led into rebellion against his Creator. That motives have much to do in influencing the volitions of free moral agents, no man in his senses will deny; but that the agent may determine in accordance with or in opposition

to any motive or any number of motives which may be presented, is, we think, equally certain, and is certainly *necessary* to free moral agency. So far as we can perceive, every motive, which could have been presented to the angel who *first sinned*, must have been, in the highest degree, conservative of his purity, his rectitude and his allegiance to God. Still, he sinned! If he had a motive to his transgression, we cannot imagine what it was, nor has God deemed it important to reveal it to man. And, we cannot conceive of any advantage we could derive from ascertaining the motive to this first sin, if there were one; as the discovery of that motive would suggest the inquiry, 'Whence that motive?' and that, a similar inquiry, and so on *ad infinitum*: inasmuch as the prime causes and first principles of all things retire back, beyond the range of all human research and investigation. Wherefore, we shall not trouble you with the various conjectures which have been indulged, with regard to the motive to angelic transgression; nor shall we hazard any hypothesis of our own on the subject. All we do or can know on the subject — all that could be of use to us to know — is that the Devil sinned and left his first estate, in the free, unconstrained abuse of his power, as a moral agent, with which his Creator had endued him, to render him capable of the highest excellence of creature-existence — the greatest amount of the most refined and elevated enjoyment possible to creature-susceptibility, and of rendering homage and rational service to his bounteous Creator. Had any necessity, whether moral or physical, if, indeed, such a distinction in regard to moral action be not absurd — had any necessity constrained the Devil to rebel against God, reason and justice must lay the blame of that

rebellion, if any be due, upon the author of that necessity; and not upon the Devil, who was the victim of that necessity, and not a moral agent in the matter. Necessity is inconsistent with all law: for law supposes freedom in the subject; and, hence, to conform to rule, under the control of necessity, is not to conform to law but to obey or yield to necessity — so, to act in opposition to the rule under the control of necessity, is not to transgress the law, but to obey necessity. Hence, a *necessary* violation of the law, no matter whence or of what kind the necessity, cannot be justly regarded as a transgression of the law, incurring censure or guilt. It is rather a misfortune, imposed by necessity upon the violator, and deserves pity, and not condemnation. The Devil, who “sinneth from the beginning,” must have been free and unconstrained in his volition, or *sin* could not have been predicated of his action, without outrage upon the foregoing principles of moral philosophy, which we regard as having all the force of axiomatic truths. And, if free to choose, and a rebel against his Creator, how great his guilt! How keen and unmitigated must be his self-reproach! How amply merited the wretchedness of his lot! *Justice* has “reserved him in chains under darkness, unto the Judgment of the great day;” as, without necessity, he rebelled against his Creator, his Benefactor, his rightful Sovereign. We proceed,

III. To consider the *character* of the Devil; and,

1. He is *running*, or *subtle*. Wherever, in the Sacred Writings, we meet with any notices of this wicked being, we are very apt to be reminded, in some way, of his cunning. *Wiles, devices and snares* are in common use with him, in prosecuting his measures of hostility against the human race. Not to be ignorant of these, is considered

of sufficient importance to be noted emphatically by St. Paul. To "stand against the wiles of the Devil," he represents it to be necessary that the Christian should "put on the whole armour of God." Those ministers of the Gospel, who act so as to incur an evil report, are represented by him as in danger of "falling into the snare of the Devil;" and all, who have fallen into that snare, are earnestly exhorted by him to pursue a course of strict propriety, "that they may recover themselves out of it." So subtle is the Devil represented to be that he assumes any mask, appears in any characters, and transforms himself into any likeness that will most effectually serve his purpose of beguiling, deceiving or ensnaring those, whose destruction or annoyance he meditates. Dr. A. Clarke supposes that the Devil has very slight pretensions to *Wisdom*. This is true; if to choose the best *end*, be a part of Wisdom: but, if, as we believe, wisdom consists in a skillful adaptation of means to the end proposed to be accomplished, then the Devil has claims to wisdom which few among the human race could rival. Such, originally, were his intellectual powers; such have been his intense application and his extensive observation, and such his vast and varied experience, in his operations among men, that very few subjects, capable of being understood by a finite being, can be presented to his notice, which are too deep for his penetration, too vast to be comprehended by him or so complex as to baffle his efforts to analyze them. With the human character, he is particularly well acquainted. No shade, in that character, no matter how obscure or lightly touched, can elude his quick discernment. All the aptitudes, passions, tendencies, and weaknesses of that character are subjects of his daily

and deeply-interested scrutiny; and with the most successful methods of operating upon that character, in all its phases, he has made himself familiar, by innumerable experiments. He unquestionably has the faculty, whether natural or aquired is matter of no consequence, of discovering the peculiarly weak points of every subject upon whom he operates, and of devising the most successful methods of assailing those weaknesses. His adroitness at intrigue might well excite the envy of the most accomplished seducer, who ever made it the business of his infamous life to lure into ruin the warm-hearted, who confided in his integrity; of the supplest demagogue, that ever stultified an honest people into the gross error of accrediting his ambition to the account of patriotism, or of the most proteus-like courtier who ever ascended to dignities, by tampering with the vendible virtues or imposing upon the unsuspecting ignorance of those who had the offices aspired to in their gift or under their patronage. He may have—he, doubtless, has, among his servants of the human race, disciples, upon whom he looks with the partiality of a father and the pride of a teacher and exemplar; but, they must content themselves with ever remaining immeasurably inferior to their distinguished master. The most versatile politician, that winds himself into unmerited distinction, by arts of indirection, calumny and fraud, can never attain to his facility in those arts, or to the success which is attendant upon his superior maneuvering. The veriest Walpole, that ever corrupted a nation, by intrigue and bribery, must ever remain a mere novice, in the arts of electioneering management, in comparison with the Devil. He is so intimately acquainted with all the mysteries of that

kind of politics, which takes its direction from expediency regardless of principle, that it is wholly improbable he ever committed a fault against the system, in the whole course of his protracted campaign against the interests of mankind and the glory of God. True it is, that his best-concerted schemes have often been rendered abortive by a wisdom vastly superior to his cunning, and by a power, compared with which his utmost might is perfect weakness; but, no instance, we think, can be shown, in which he has failed through mistake or miscalculation. How vastly important is it, then, that in all our unavoidable intercourse with this subtle being, we should distrust our own skill, and place ourselves under the guidance and instruction of Him, against whom no wisdom or cunning can ever succeed!

2. A second trait, in the character of this evil being, is *falsehood*. This has been already glanced at, but it deserves more particular notice. Dissimulation, fraud and falsehood are artifices by which he usually aims to accomplish his purposes of mischief against man. In the employment of these, he is entirely unscrupulous and exceedingly adroit. He has no difficulty in assuming any character which he deems best suited to his designs. To the niggardly, he can urge domestic claims, and the claims of justice, with the gravity of a social moralist or of a judge, in bar of every appeal to liberality and benevolence. To the spendthrift, he can deal out the most biting sarcasms against meanness, hoarding pelf and miserly stinting, to prevent any attention to economy and prudent regulation of expenses by the rate of income. To the votary of pleasure, he is the apologist of a life of gaiety and dissipation; while he fills the heart of the con-

scientiously abstemious with painful doubts whether it be innocent to inhale the odor of a flower, or to indulge the taste with the flavor of an apple. Like the detestable miscreant, who professes to adore virtue, that he may enter her temple, defile her sanctuary and desecrate her altar, he will affect admiration of virtue and piety, when his object is to undermine the foundations of the former, and to substitute for the latter inoperative creeds, heartless rites and barren ceremonies. To the youthful adventurer, new to the scenes of life, he holds up a perspective, in which can be seen no limit to the opportunity of reforming the life, changing the heart and making "his calling and election" to eternal happiness in heaven, an assured matter; but, no sooner is serious concern for these things awakened in his bosom, than this supple maneuverer presents a retrospect, so filled with wasted time, slighted opportunities and contemned overtures, that despair of change and of salvation is urgently impressed upon the mind of the penitent. The humble, sincere and diligent Christian, he often annoys with painful apprehensions of apostacy and ruin: while to the already half-fallen, the lukewarm and the formal, he chants a requiem, in which peace and safety are promised with soothing effect. He takes, with equal facility, the character of an angel of light, affecting homage to the Deity and benevolence to man; and the groveling, tortuous and malignant attitude of a serpent, who conceals his movements that he may destroy with the more certainty. Anon he flames, before the trembling gaze of a feeble-minded antagonist, in all the lurid horrors of the Devil that he is. And, even this truthful exhibition of himself is a lie; as it is meant as a menace against one,

who, having “recovered himself out of the snare” of this enemy, is no longer within his power. Our blessed Saviour tells us, speaking of the Devil, that “when he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own; for he is a liar, and the Father of it.” The father of lying! What a detestable character! A worse could hardly be conceived, as belonging to either man or Devil. Falsehood severs the bonds of society, by destroying that mutual confidence which is essential to their existence. Were there no other reason to call in question the justness of Milton’s panegyric on the social character of the infernal hosts—“Devil with Devil damn’d, firm concord hold”—this would be abundantly sufficient. For, however they may co-operate in their efforts for the ruin of virtue and happiness, there is, we conceive, no concord in their intercourse with one another—no harmony in their feelings towards one another. Truth and consequent confidence are indispensable to agreement and fidelity in social intercourse; and these cannot be found in a society composed of those whose natures are a perennial source of falsehood.

3. A third characteristic of the Devil is *restless activity*. When he presented himself among the sons of God, as narrated in the book of Job, he was interrogated as to whence he came; and he answered, “From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.” His occupation lies extended over the whole region which is inhabited by the human race. Wherever a human being is found, there this malignant foe to truth, goodness and happiness finds employment. And so intent is he on the accomplishment of his cruel purposes, that he loses no opportunity, nor suffers a moment to pass without making it subservient to them, to the utmost extent of

his ability. Peter compares him, in his activity and fell purpose, to the lion which, impelled by hunger, ranges the forest in search of prey, roaring in his impatience for the means of satisfying his ravenous appetite. "He goeth about, like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." Let it not be supposed that we design either to disparage industry, or to praise the Devil, at the expense of those miserable drones among men, who seem to think themselves born to no other purpose than that of taxing the labor of their fellow-creatures for the means of supporting an existence, but little removed, in point of activity, from mere vegetation. No! *their* idleness is not quite so bad as the industry of the Devil; for it only tends to clothe themselves and those dependent on them in rags, or, which is equally base, in eleemosynary raiment; to excite the contempt, the scorn and the indignation of the better part of their species; to deprecate their dignity and narrow down the scope of their intellect, and to humiliate their relations in society, and, perhaps, secure their personal ruin forever: while, the industry of the Devil is intended and calculated to mar all that is fair in moral character; to destroy all that is noble in present enjoyment, and to throw the pall of utter hopelessness over the prospects of the future, throughout the whole scope of human destiny. Busy to do mischief, the Devil cannot lay claim to the honor of virtuous industry. His activity is rendered exceedingly efficient, by the celerity with which he can transport himself through the regions of space, no matter how vast, in which he operates. The speed imparted by the impulse of wind or steam will bear no comparison with his rapidity of movement. Even the conveyance of intelligence by the Electric Telegraph,

must be regarded as slow, compared with the fleetness of his motion. Thought, of man, itself, encumbered as it is by association, will be distanced by that motion. Nor is there other impediment in his course, but where the Divine will is interposed. An unembodied spirit, adamant opposes no obstacle to his progress—

"Walls within walls no more his passage bar,
Than unopposing space of liquid air."

4. A fourth trait in the character of the Devil, is *implacable hatred against mankind*. Whence this hatred, who can determine? We can only conjecture. We suppose, then, that it is because man was created in the image of that God, against whom this evil being had rebelled—was created to enjoy that God, and to manifest forth His glory. Possibly, moreover, the Devil looked upon man as designed to succeed to the happiness which he and his angels had forfeited; to shine in the sphere of glory and brightness from which he and they had been cast out for rebellion against their Creator. Envy, then, and pride, and malignity against that Power which had thwarted his ambition, crushed his rebellion and punished his treason, by headlong precipitation into everlasting perdition, may have been his incitements to the inveterate hatred with which he has ever regarded man. Be this as it may, it is placed beyond question, by the Divine records, that he does regard man with bitter, inextinguishable and unmitigable hatred, and pursues him with rancorous and indefatigable hostility.

5. *Implacable enmity against God*, is another prominent trait in the character of the Devil—we should say, indeed, that it is the substratum of his moral character. This is his

master passion; the mainspring which sets in motion his whole moral being. This impels him to incessant efforts for the subversion of all the works of God — the defeat of all His plans. With no other inducement, he is untiring in his endeavors to deface the beauty and disturb the harmony of the worlds which God has called into being, for His own glory, and for the diffusion of enjoyment. Incited by this, he aims his fiercest assaults, with unwearyed perseverance, against the Divine Benevolence, in conferring happiness. To the utmost extent of his power, he prevents, disturbs or destroys the happiness which God confers upon His creatures. Into the cup of felicity, prepared for His creatures, by the munificence of the benevolent Creator, this foe of God and happiness, whenever he may, infuses sin, disorder, pain and death, and then urges upon the victims of his malignity, deep and oft-repeated draughts from the poisoned chalice. From these destructive outrages upon the creatures of God, no benefits result to himself — none are expected by him to result. His own anguish is not mitigated, his own lost dignity is not retrieved, his own miserable condition is in no degree ameliorated. Malice alone is his motive. Revenge against Him whom he had insulted, against Him from whom he had revolted, against whom he had rebelled, and who had defeated and chastised him with merited punishment: this malice and revenge are his only incitements to maraud upon all creation; and, so far as permitted, to bring confusion and woe, and desolation, into the regions designed for order and happiness. Nay: so far from his expecting any benefit to result to him, from his destructive operations against other creatures of God, the Devil knows, beyond all question, that he will but augment his own

calamity, in proportion to the success of his malevolent attempts against the well-being of those creatures. For, whoever he may be, whether man or fiend, who disturbs the harmony and order of nature, who assails the peace or corrupts the virtue of his fellow-creatures, will find that he has fired a train, that, sooner or later, will take hold on himself, and amply avenge upon him the injury he has done to others. "His own iniquity shall reprove himself, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own head." But, though this must be known by the Devil to be an established principle of the Divine government, and though his own experience has furnished him with abundant evidence of the universal application and unfailing efficiency of this principle, so far as his aggressions upon God's other creatures are concerned, yet, under the maddening influence of his rage against Jehovah, he persists in his outrages upon those within his reach, and thus heaps wrath upon wrath on his own devoted head. The Object of his hatred, being personally, as he knows, far above the reach of his utmost malignity, he meanly seeks to wreak his vengeance upon Him, in rendering void his purposes of kindness towards the creatures, upon whom he *can* operate his malignant schemes of revenge. Alas! that creatures are found, who, seduced by his wiles, have fallen into the snare and under the power of the Devil, and who are now enduring the terrible consequences of his hatred of God, and of their own folly and sin, in yielding to his devices! Without their own iniquitous concurrence in his mischievous devices, he could have had no power against them; but, having yielded themselves his willing captives, the Divine protection, which would otherwise have secured them from his malice, has been withdrawn; and,

till they “recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil,” as through Divine grace they may, they will be left to his cruelty.

6. Another trait in the Devil’s character is that he is *miserable*—unutterably miserable. And, how should he be otherwise than miserable! Can a being, whose moral nature is in a state of entire disorder, be anything else than miserable? Can one who has fallen from high, perhaps the highest eminence in which any creature could be placed, into a degradation so low as that in which the Devil is doomed to grovel eternally, avoid being miserable? Can he, who once sat high in the circle of pure and happy spirits, but now must associate only with the corrupt, malignant and degraded outcasts from purity and bliss, fail to be miserable? Or, especially, can he who once basked in the smile of Divine approval, but who now cowers beneath the frown of righteous indignation, upon the face of Divine Majesty, be otherwise than unspeakably and hopelessly miserable? In these circumstances, he must be miserable, though he had the right of entrance into, or even of residence in the highest regions of celestial glory—though he could range, uncontrolled, where fruitfulness, and beauty, and grandeur conspire to render earth a fit scene for noble enjoyment. Milton’s conception of his state is as just as it is poetical:

“*Me miserable!*
“*Which way I fly is hell! Myself am hell!*”

In his tortured bosom, “the worm which never dieth,” exerts the rage of eternal, insatiable hunger; and, upon his unsheltered head, is poured forth, in one continued stream, “the fire which is never quenched.” Amid the

throng of happy spirits, who enjoy perennial blessedness, could he be so associated, he would feel the unutterable torments of *merited* damnation ; and, while traversing the face of the earth or the fields of air, surrounded by their beauty, their sublimity and their splendor, the darkness of the pit would enshroud him in its horrors, and he would feel, in his most rapid progress, the adamantine chains of his fearful destiny binding him over, in sure custody, to "the judgment of the GREAT DAY." If he have any other motive to action, equally urgent with his hatred against God, it is the goadings of the misery which allows him no respite, no quiet during his eternal night of anguish and horror. Restlessness and pain prompt to action, even when no hope of advantage is presented ; and such action, in an intensely evil being, will, in the nature of things, be evil. Consequences are overlooked by despair ; and the hopelessly miserable rush upon action, reckless of the increase of anguish they may procure to themselves. Unutterably miserable, and utterly hopeless, the Devil instinctively and recklessly applies to action, not as the means of relief, or with any hope of advantage, but from sheer restlessness and impatience of pain.

THIS sketch of the character of the Devil—the grand adversary of God and man, however imperfect it may be, is, we believe, in strict accordance with the Word of God—the only reliable source of information, on the subject, to which we can have access. And, if our representation of his character be just, how unutterably wicked must he be, and how formidable to man must be the enmity, by which he is impelled to ceaseless and unrelenting hostility against him ! Cunning, under the direction of superior intellectual powers ; deceitful, with no regard for truth ;

full of malignity both towards man and towards his Creator; miserable, utterly and hopelessly miserable, and industrious, with a capacity for activity vastly exceeding any which exists among men, and as indefatigable as it is efficient—such a being, uncontrolled by superior power, could and would soon overwhelm our whole race in irretrievable ruin. He has malignity to prompt, skill to devise and activity to accomplish plans of debasement, and torture, and ruin for the human race, and wickedness and falsehood, to render him wholly unscrupulous in regard to the means of carrying those plans into successful execution. With this in remembrance, let us consider, more particularly,

IV. *His hostile proceedings against the human race.* This part of the investigation, is what, most of all, in the subject, concerns ourselves; and to this the most earnest attention is solicited. The final object, at which the Devil aims in all the influence he exerts upon men, is to involve them in misery, similar to that of which he is the wretched and irredeemable prey—to make them sharers in that “everlasting fire, prepared for him and his angels”—not for man. As this purpose cannot be accomplished, while men retain anything virtuous or godlike in their nature and character, it is, with him, a purpose equally settled, to debauch their principles, corrupt their affections and passions and demoralize their lives; and that, thus, by rendering them perfectly wicked, like himself, he may make them to be abandoned of the Divine protection, and left helpless in his hands, to be sharers of his woe, as they are of his wickedness. He knows that, in proportion to their aberration from the path of rectitude, will be their privation of enjoyment; and that, could he seduce

them wholly from their allegiance to God, their unhappiness would be complete, and, consequently, the great original design of their creation would be defeated. Hence, he is unwearied in his endeavors to induce them to fill up the measure of their sins. But, should he fail in the accomplishment of this, his main design, he will strain every nerve to lessen, as far as possible, the amount of their enjoyment, and to accumulate upon them as many cares, anxieties and afflictions as their Great Protector will suffer to come upon them. Witness the case of holy, patient, upright Job. Unassailable in his religious and moral integrity, Divine Providence, with a view to the rendering of Job a signal example, to all future ages, of patience and integrity, under the most varied and severe afflictions, and of securing to him ample compensation for all he suffered, permitted the malice of the Devil to display itself in the infliction of every agony save guilt, despair and death. And certainly he improved his license to the utmost. *How* the Devil proceeds, in his attempts to corrupt and destroy; or, failing in these, to disquiet and afflict men, is what remains to be considered; and,

1. He employs *direct temptation*, for the former purpose and with a view to the securing of the latter. By this we mean, that he tempts men *directly* to the performance of some act, or the indulgence of some passion or appetite, which is known to be sinful, by the party tempted. Often, it is the case that men can assign no other reason for their perpetration of a crime, than that they had a strong inclination to perpetrate it; while every reason which presented itself to the mind, in relation to it, earnestly dissuaded from it. Very often, temptations of this sort, offending not only against every applicable reason, but

against natural propensity and all the habits of previous life are experienced. These temptations, whether yielded to or resisted, are phenomena in the experience of many, and require an origin and agency without and apart from the mental operations of the tempted person. We have known a case, in which a person, who had been educated in an utter horror of profane language, who had lived to a period beyond middle life, without ever having employed an expression of that kind on any occasion, while entirely alone, with no exasperation of feeling, nay, with more than ordinary calmness and devotion of spirit, was suddenly incited and all but irresistibly compelled to the utterance of blasphemies, that might have shocked a veteran in this odious vice. The temptation was promptly resisted, but was repeated through the lapse of nearly an hour, with a pertinacity and an urgency which were exceedingly annoying. Who can account for an experience of this kind, without supposing the agency of a wicked spiritual being, who could *immediately* operate upon the mind? We, certainly, cannot. The tempted often know that the course, to which they are incited, is not only wicked, but, *in every respect*, injurious to themselves—that the gratification promised will be slight and momentary, while degradation, loss of peace and interminable remorse and corroding anxieties and apprehensions will follow upon that gratification. Would man, bad and foolish as he may be, *thus* tempt himself? We speak not of those whom habit has rendered slaves to vice; but, of him, who is just entering upon a vicious course—still free from the dominion of masterful habit, still sufficiently clear-sighted to perceive the pernicious tendency of the course indicated by the temptation. And, yet, the temptation is urged

with a force all but irresistible! This life, with all its respectabilities, its comforts and its perpetuity, and heaven itself are in one scale—the indulgence of a passion, say lust, covetousness or revenge in the other; who does not perceive to which side reason and prudence and conscience must adhere? And, yet, the temptation is often so strong as to bear them all down! Must there not be supposed a coadjutory or, more properly, a principal force, apart from the tempted person himself, to account for this wholly unphilosophical tendency in human nature? So thought the framers of our system of criminal jurisprudence. That grave system of practical wisdom recognises the “Instigation of the Devil,” in those crimes upon which it visits the extreme of punishment, for the safety of society. Pain, disgrace and hell-torments eternal, stand forth, in dismal array, as the sure consequences of yielding to the temptation presented; and, yet, though the advantage promised by the temptation is known to be of very slight importance, and as evanescent as it is trivial, still the temptation is often so urgent as to put the sternest integrity to a severe trial, and to overcome those who have less firmness of virtuous purpose. Such temptations are often resisted and repelled, time and again—still returning, after every repulse, with added force and urgency; till, despairing of ultimate victory in their own strength, the tempted either yield and are undone, or call for aid upon Him who is able to deliver those who flee to Him for help.

2. The Devil employs the circumstances, in which men are placed, as instruments of their temptation to evil. The diversity of his operations, in this class of temptations, is so great that it is impossible to bring them into distinct

view in a brief Discourse. Suffice it to remark, that there is scarcely a situation, in which man is placed, that is not, by this subtle adversary of man, rendered a fruitful source of temptation. Our most favorable, as well as our most embarrassing circumstances are thus employed by him, with equal address and efficiency. In the sunshine of prosperity, he lies in wait, amid beautiful flowers and in pleasant lawns, to strike his deadly fangs into the vitals of the gay and thoughtless; and, in the gloom of adversity, he hovers over the scene, adding horrors to the gloom. He renders the busy, bustling multitude the instruments of mutual contamination, and of reciprocal suffering. He haunts the shades of retirement, filling the cell of the recluse with images of vice. He turns the tide of youthful ardor and vigor into the channels of dissipation and riot, and oppresses the aged with despondency and fretfulness, by means of their lassitude and their infirmities. The rich he swells with pride, and lulls into a false confidence, by means of their abundance; while he renders querulous against Providence, and envious of their more fortunate fellow-creatures, those who are in straitened circumstances. And, as he uses the circumstances of men as the means of their moral perversion, and their consequent ruin or disquiet, so does he seize upon every peculiarity of temper, every prejudice of education and every leading bias of his nature to work evil to man. The aspiring spirit he will hurry on, by the impulse of ambition, to the invasion of others' rights, no matter how much of sorrow, of poverty, privation and bloodshedding may be involved in their enterprises. On the other hand, he prevails on the gentle, quiet and meek-spirited to yield up their dearest rights and often their

most sacred principles, rather than be involved in the struggle and conflict necessary for their maintenance. Those in power are too often, under the influence of this secret but efficient adviser, induced to stretch prerogative to a wanton abuse of power, and the oppression of the subject; while those whose duty it is to obey are often led on by the Devil to insubordination and rebellion against the mildest and most equitable authority. Systems of Government both in Church and State, lovely for their symmetry, invaluable for their well-proved utility, and consecrated by their age, have been rased, to their foundations, by the lust of power, in rulers, or the intractableness of the people, excited and led on by this implacable foe of beauty, order and happiness. Influenced by him, kings have sacrificed their crowns, and their heads too, rather than surrender a supposed prerogative which was oppressive to their people. And, under the same infernal impulse and guidance, the people have torn up the dykes of law and order, and let in, upon themselves, an overwhelming tide of anarchy and ruin, in defense of supposed rights, which, if ascertained and established, would have been pernicious rather than beneficial. The Devil well understands that the maintenance of all individual rights is utterly incompatible with social safety and peace; and there is nothing that more effectually serves his malignant purpose than the embroilment of a society, in relation to a right of questionable validity and utility. The sanguine and self-confident he drives headlong upon the precipice of presumptuous temerity; while he plunges the fearful and faint-hearted into the abyss of depondency and despair. He assures the *former* of impunity, in any course which he may have chosen to pursue; and affrights

the *latter*, with imaginary dangers, even in the path of duty. He fills the fancy of the credulous, with superstitions, so grossly absurd as might almost move the mirth of an idiot; while, to the skeptically-disposed, he represents the clearest and best-established truths as being deficient in rational credibility. Nor is it matter of any serious importance to this artful enemy of mankind whether he keeps man from truth, by too much facility of faith or too little; for, his great purpose is accomplished by one equally as by the other. He knows that man can degrade his humanity, wander from the way of righteousness and stumble into perdition, as effectually by going on in the darkness of *unbelief*, as by following the most erratic *ignis fatuus*, that ever beguiled a simple soul to the bottomless pit. Human nature is not more degraded, nor society more injured, nor God more blasphemed by the most absurd superstition, that ever gained currency in the world, than by unreasonable and obstinate skepticism or unbelief. Even the sanctuary of God, its rites and the Word of God itself, are often, in the hands of this artful deceiver, the instruments of mischief to man. To persons peculiarly constituted, or peculiarly educated, it is a frequent ruse, with him, to represent attention to the public ordinances of the sanctuary as the whole of religious duty, and as securing salvation to those who punctually render such attention: while others are taught by him to regard such attention as no part of religious duty, nor, in any way, needful in order to salvation. The former are taught, by him, to expect the Divine approbation on account of external performances alone—the other, on the contrary, he makes to believe that these performances are not at all

required, under a spiritual dispensation, in which “ love is the fulfilling of the law,” and in which worship, to be acceptable, must be “ in spirit and in truth.” Some he inspires with an exclusive regard to *doctrines*, while precepts are repudiated, as of no obligation on Christians; but he persuades others that it is no matter what doctrines are believed, if the heart and practice are regulated by correct moral *precepts*. In a word, it is his favorite plan to divide what God, in His word, hath joined together; and to fix a degree of attention on one of the parts, which properly belongs only to the whole of the system.

But, even when he despairs of a final triumph over the virtue of a Christian, or of the consequent ruin of that Christian’s happiness, such is the intense malignity of his nature that he will squeeze, into the cup, of that Christian’s enjoyment, every drop of bitterness that he can. Nor is the virulence of his enmity, or the industry of his exertions remitted, till man becomes, through death, *unalterable* in goodness, and *unassailable* in bliss. Never, till then, will man be beyond the reach of his artillery. The Christian may, and, if faithful, will be protected, by that “ shield of faith,” by which are quenched all the fiery darts of the Devil: but, if, at any time, that shield be suffered to fall from the hand, those fiery darts will take effect — fatal effect, if the wounds they inflict be not healed with the sacred balsam of the Saviour’s blood. We should, therefore, be ever on our guard. We should never forget nor neglect the orders of our Great Captain, to “ watch and pray, that we enter not into temptation.” Our enemy is subtle, is malignant, is indefatigable. In our own strength, we are utterly incapable of waging success-

ful warfare against him. It behooves us, therefore, to be incessant in our applications to Him, who has promised to His faithful people, who look to Him for succor, that "no weapon that is formed against them shall prosper," and that He will "bring them off more than conquerors;" and crown them, as victors, in His everlasting kingdom.

DISCOURSE VII.

THE FIRST TRANSGRESSION OF MAN, AND ITS LEGAL CONSEQUENCES.

By the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation.—
Rom. v. 18.

IN a former Discourse, we attempted to delineate the character and condition of man—such as he was when he came from the hand of his Creator. We represented him, on Scripture authority, as dwelling in the garden of Eden—as being holy, harmless, undefiled, free from any stain of sin, any bias to ungodliness, with all the powers and passions of his nature sweetly harmonizing in the accomplishment of the will of God—as enjoying intercourse and favor with God, and, with these, all the happiness of which his nature was susceptible—as secured in a perpetuity of these ineffable advantages, on the sole condition of continued fidelity to the obligation he was under to God. Too soon, alas! was this delightful Eden to cast him forth from her blissful bowers! Too soon were her pleasant walks, for want of tendance, to be overgrown with poisonous weeds and cumbering brambles, and infested with loathsome and noxious reptiles! Too soon did man, by rebellion against his Sovereign Creator, draw an impassable line of separation between him and her delightful haunts, at the same time, excluding himself from the

radiant beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and enveloping himself in the cheerless gloom of Divine displeasure: — henceforth to wander, in the world without—an unblest exile, pursued by the curse of his Creator! Too soon did he, by transgressing the law of his probation, incur the “judgment to condemnation,” upon both himself and his posterity, by the infallible award of his righteous Judge. Of this deplorable change, in the condition of man, it becomes now our painful duty to treat; and, in doing so, we shall conform to the following plan: *viz.*,

- I. Consider the nature of the offense spoken of in the text:
- II. Inquire what is to be understood by the judgment to condemnation, which came upon all men; and,
- III. Vindicate the propriety of that judgment.

I. We are to *consider the nature of the offense spoken of in the text.*

In our investigation of this point, it will be proper to recur to the substance of some of our remarks in a former Discourse. This will be done in as brief a manner as possible. Man, as we there attempted to prove, was created with those powers, which at once fitted and indicated him to be a free and accountable moral Agent. His nature would have been wholly unaccountable on any other supposition; for he not only felt conscious of the power to choose freely between two opposite courses of conduct, but perceived that one of these courses was wrong and the other right, and that it was his duty to choose and pursue the right, and to refuse and avoid the wrong course. This power of choice and of moral discrimination, and this perception of moral obligation, both constituted and pointed him out as a free, accountable,

moral agent. From the fact of his accountability resulted the correlative fact that there was an authority to which he owed obedience, and to which he must render an account, for the manner in which he acquitted himself of his obligation. This authority could be none other than that of Him who had called him into existence, and endowed him with those powers which constituted him an accountable being. From the nature of the relation, subsisting between the creature and his Creator, and from the extent of the obligation implied in or imposed by that relation, it clearly follows that there could be no other limits to the obedience, which might be justly required of the creature, than those which are marked by *moral fitness*. Whatever, therefore, was not contrary to the principles of abstract *right*, might justly be enjoined by the Creator, as the *criterion* of the creature's *fidelity*. And, in the infinite rectitude of the Creator, there was absolute security that nothing abstractly wrong would be imposed. In making trial then of the fidelity of His creatures, God could be bound to no particular rule, with regard to the terms He should impose. We suppose, however, that the circumstances of the imposition might tend to extenuate or enhance the guilt of the offense, if man should be unfaithful to his obligation in the matter. If, for instance, the duty enjoined were extremely difficult of performance—if the effort required, for that performance, were proportioned to the utmost ability of him upon whom the task was imposed—if some important sacrifice were required, some painful self-denial enjoined—then the circumstances of the imposition might plead somewhat in extenuation of the crime, though by no means in exculpation of the criminal. On the contrary, if the duty required was sim-

ple and easy of performance—if no arduous exertion was necessary in complying with the requirement—if no painful sacrifice, no rigid self-denial was imposed, then the guilt of the offender would be greatly enhanced. Indeed, it seems to us that every one must perceive that the magnitude of his offense would be in an inverse proportion to the greatness of the effort required in the performance of the duty enjoined upon him. We make these observations, because some who have more just claims to wit than to common-sense attempt to throw ridicule upon the Scripture account of the Fall of man, because that account represents his condemnation as consequent upon his eating an apple, as they flippantly designate the fruit of the tree of knowledge! Did these scoffers ever reflect that God had a perfect right to select just what test He pleased, for the trial of His accountable creatures? Did they ever take the trouble to consider that the smallness of the prohibition, by which God was pleased to test the fidelity of man, was a striking proof of His goodness? Or, did they ever consider whether this very circumstance were not calculated to aggravate the criminality of the offender, who, restive under so very slight a restraint, violated his obligation to his Benefactor and Sovereign.

Having premised these things, we proceed to the consideration of the offense, which brought condemnation upon the first man and all of his posterity. God, when He had created man, placed him in a situation abounding with everything necessary to his subsistence and comfort. Every appetite was regaled, by an object appropriate to its peculiar nature—every passion was soothed, by something which corresponded to its character. Intellectual and spiritual enjoyments were showered upon him, with

bountiful profusion. The whole of creation was placed before him, and he was authorized and cordially invited to a free indulgence of every desire—with only one small, one inconsiderable restriction. The fruit of one solitary tree he must not eat, he must not taste, he must not touch. This restriction was sanctioned by the fearful denunciation, “In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die!” This sole privation was to be the test of his fealty. By this, he was to be proved, whether he would be faithful in his obedience to his Maker and Sovereign. There was nothing obscure, nothing intricate or difficult of comprehension, in the terms of this prohibition. They were, in fact, fully comprehended, by those to whom they were prescribed. That Eve understood them, is manifest from the answer she made to the serpent, when he commenced his attack upon her fidelity. “Of every tree of the garden,” says she, “we may freely eat; but, of the fruit of the tree, which is in the midst of the garden, we may not eat; for God hath said,” etc. Could such a command, so fearfully sanctioned and so well understood, be violated by man? How shall we account for a fact so strange, that a being, whose moral principles were immaculately pure, whose freedom of choice and of action was unquestionable, and whose enjoyments were so adequate to the demands of his nature, should, and for so small a gratification too, violate a plain command of his acknowledged Sovereign, his bountiful Benefactor; and that, too, notwithstanding the assurance, full before him, that death would be the consequence of his fault? Perhaps it will be sufficiently accounted for, by the fact, that, in any given case, an accountable being must be able to choose either the right or the wrong; and that man was tempted to a wrong

choice, by a being whose subtlety has never been rivaled. To suppose an incapability of choosing either right or wrong, would, in the case where such incapability existed, disqualify the party, laboring under it, for accountability. Allowing this to be so, it might happen, in a thousand cases, and in this for one, that it would be impossible to assign any other reason for the choice of an accountable agent, but simply that *he willed it*. It appears, however, that, in the case of the first parents of mankind, the motion to rebellion did not originate in the heart of man. A being whom, in our last Discourse, we brought under your notice, seems to have looked with malignant, perhaps envious feelings upon the happiness of the human pair, and to have determined on attempting their destruction. For this purpose, he selected, from among the creatures familiar to man, one which was well known to be remarkable for sagacity, to be the instrument of his satanical design. Whatever creature this may have been, whether a serpent, as our translation of the Scriptures has rendered the original, a creature of the monkey species, as some suppose, or some other creature, we are not concerned now to inquire. It is enough to observe, that, whatever creature it was, it was merely the instrument employed by the Devil; who, probably, from the circumstance of his having employed a serpent as his instrument on this occasion, received, in the sacred Scriptures, the appellation of "Old Serpent." His attack was planned with subtlety, and with an accurate knowledge of human nature. He did not deem it prudent to assail the *united* forces of the first pair. He knew that society, in any enterprise, inspires caution, confidence, and consistency. His policy was to "divide and conquer"—a policy he and his disciples have

always since pursued; and, too commonly, with success. He deemed it most feasible, too, to make his first attempt where there was most sensibility in the subject; and, perhaps, where there would be most influence in the example. He chose to commence his operations by assailing the woman when alone. He managed his attack, as might have been expected, with great address—avoiding, at first, anything that might shock the piety of Eve. He seems to have aimed at making her believe that either God had not laid an interdict upon the tree of knowledge, or that the interdict was inconsistent with the general license He had given to man, to eat freely of all the trees of the garden. He says to her, “Yea, hath God said, ‘ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?’” This is not an affirmation that God had laid any prohibition upon man, but a question asked, in a manner that intimated a doubt whether He had. But, the woman repulsed this insinuation, by assuring the deceiver that there was such a prohibition, couched in terms the most explicit possible, and perfectly consistent with the privilege of general indulgence, secured to man by the Divine grant. Driven from this position, the Devil took ground for a bolder, more direct and, alas, for man! a more successful attack. He assures the woman that, though the fruit of the tree of knowledge is interdicted, the penalty will not be inflicted on her, in the event of her taking and eating it. He says, “Ye shall not surely die.” He seems to say, ‘This denunciation is an idle menace — a mere bugbear, to frighten the timid and fainthearted.’ Finding his bold blasphemy listened to without horror, by his too facile auditress, he proceeded to asseverate that the prohibition involved a privation of the most important advantage, and to insinuate that God

had imposed it from sheer, ungenerous caprice, if not from selfish ambition. "God doth know," says the tempter, "that in the day ye eat thereof, ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Ah! what a snare was here laid for the woman! She was assured that, by violating the command of her Maker, she not only would incur no danger, but be immeasurably exalted in dignity, and vastly enlarged in point of privilege. Milton, with much plausibility, supposes that, to render the temptation more effective, the serpent is made to assure Eve that he had eaten of the forbidden fruit, not only without experiencing the threatened penalty, but with the immense advantage, that speech and reason were conferred upon him by its influence. The inference was obvious, that, if eating that fruit had wrought such great and ennobling changes upon a creature of so vastly inferior nature, it must exalt her and Adam, if they should test its efficacy, to the highest pitch of elevation in the scale of being. Be this as it may, it is certain that the tempter did succeed, in bringing Eve to call in question the truth of God, and in inspiring her with ambitious thoughts of rising to eminence and attaining to godlike knowledge, by eating of the forbidden fruit. "When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and a tree to be desired, to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof and did eat." Thus was one of the heads of the human race seduced from allegiance to God, by the pernicious influences of diabolical temptation; but, the point, at which the Old Serpent aimed, was not yet gained. Had Adam continued steadfast in his obedience, the woman might have perished in her own deceiving, and God could have provided another help-meet for him, as easily as He had provided the one now cast away and ruined

by her transgression. The race of man was not yet ruined. But, we are soon, too soon, alas! told that the woman “gave unto her husband, and he did eat.” No deception was practised upon Adam. He does not pretend that there was any. He says, on his examination for the offense, before his righteous Judge, “The woman, whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.” St. Paul assures us that the “man was not deceived.” What, then, could have influenced Adam, with all his senses about him, to commit so heinous an offense, and, thereby, incur so terrible a calamity to himself and his posterity? Milton very justly, we think, as well as beautifully, ascribes his grievous dereliction of duty,—the insane destruction of himself and his posterity, to the influence of his wife. He says that Adam was

“Not by stronger reason moved,
“But fondly overcome by female charms.”

The offense of Adam, it was, that achieved the destiny of wretchedness and ruin for the whole human family. The offense of Eve alone could not have produced it. “By his offense,” on account of his transgression, “judgment came upon all men unto condemnation.” He being the origin and federal head of the human race, God would have found means to secure to him a holy and happy progeny, notwithstanding the disobedience and ruin of his wife, had he continued faithful to his allegiance to his Creator and Sovereign. But, when *he* sinned, he poisoned the very source and fountain of human existence; and, by his single transgression, involved his whole race, as well as himself, in guilt, depravity and misery. That this is a correct view of the subject, is, we think, obvious from

the language of the text. The apostle does not say, 'By the *one offense* of the prime parents of the human family, all are brought under condemnation,' but "By the offense of *one*." Alas! that he, who was "created in the image of God," holy and happy, to whom the destiny of a world was entrusted, should have relinquished, to female blandishments and influence, his high dignity, his moral rectitude, his peace and the well-being of millions on millions of his race! In every age, men have proved themselves to be the legitimate sons of uxorious Adam in this particular. Would that women would less frequently follow the example of Eve, in using their influence to draw away their devoted admirers from religion and from God! We proceed,

II. *To inquire what is to be understood by the judgment unto condemnation, which came upon all men.*

By judgment, here, we are to understand judicial award or decision; and this supposes a judicial investigation, by proper authority. This authority must have been either original or delegated; and, if original, it must have been the authority of that Being who claimed obedience, of man, as His right, and that Being was God, the Creator of man. We have no reason to believe that any delegated authority presided in the trial of offending and rebellious man—nay, we have undeniable evidence that God Himself presided. Hence, the sense of the text seems to be this—'When man rebelled against God, when he disobeyed the Divine command, God entered into judgment with him; and, on his being fully convicted of the offense charged against him, awarded sentence or judgment of condemnation against him and all his unborn posterity.' By condemnation, is to be understood a formal and

authoritative recognition and declaration of guilt, and a denunciation of the punishment due to such guilt. The judgment spoken of in the text, then, embraced all these points, both with regard to the personal offenders and their whole race. Adam and Eve stood convicted of actual, personal and voluntary transgression of the command of God, and were, consequently, declared guilty, and were sentenced, as such, to suffer the penalty annexed to that law which they had so transgressed. But the offspring of this guilty pair stood convicted of the crime, *only as they were included in their parents*, and not as actual, personal and voluntary transgressors. And we are fully persuaded that the sentence of punishment denounced upon them, must have been directed against them *only as they were contained in the loins of their parents*; and, that, consequently, they would have had no more consciousness of guilt, or of the suffering denounced in the penalty, than they had had volition in the crime of violating the law. We know that "the judgments of God are according to truth;" and this could not have been the case, had He declared guilty of actual, personal and voluntary transgression, the unborn and unconscious progeny of Adam and Eve, or sentenced them to personal and sensible sufferings, as a punishment for a sin, in which they could have had no voluntary participation. We would here call attention to the characteristics of that guilt which was incurred by the "one offense" of man; and,

1. It was the guilt of having introduced a disastrous disturbance, of the order and harmony which the Creator had established, into the world which He had created. And, it was such a disturbance, especially, in the moral order and harmony, so established—by far the most

important department of that order and harmony! We say, that it was *especially* a disturbance of moral order and harmony; but it was not *exclusively* so. Physical nature, throughout its whole course probably, felt its jarring influence—to some extent we know it did. The earth was cursed, on account of it: so, that, instead of yielding its fruits, as it previously did, to the *agreeable* industry of its inhabitants, it required, in its cultivation, for the means of subsistence, the *arduous toil* of man. “In the sweat of thy face, shalt thou eat bread,” was a part of the sentence, pronounced against offending man. We have no doubt, moreover, that the pestilential vapors, the fatal miasma, that so often sweep over devoted districts, thronging their graveyards with their victims, have their origin in that pernicious disturbance of order of which man was found guilty, in the “one offense.” And, how heavy this guilt! Who can estimate its weight! To throw into confusion the most beautiful order, the most delightful harmony—to obstruct the current of abounding good, and to open, upon the sensibilities of creatures meant for happiness, the fountains of conflict, of pain and of “all the ills that flesh is heir to!”—How oppressive the guilt of having introduced such disturbance into the order and harmony of nature.

2. It was the guilt of self-destruction. Man destroyed his moral beauty, when he committed the “one offense,” of which the text informs us he was convicted. But, as we shall, on a future occasion, discuss this point somewhat particularly, we shall not now dwell upon it. Nor, shall we here do more than barely observe that man destroyed his life, both spiritual and physical, by his “one offense,” bringing upon himself and his posterity spiritual and

physical death. But, it may be proper to remark, that as a consequence of his disturbance of moral and physical order and harmony, he destroyed his own enjoyment of existence and that of his posterity: so that trouble arose, to him and to them, as naturally and as surely "as the sparks fly upward." To what goading internal conflicts, what agonizing pains of body, what disappointments of hope, what frustrations of favorite plans, what infidelity of trusted friends, what bereavements of objects that were inexpressibly dear to the affections, what malice of enemies, what corroding apprehensions of coming, inevitable death, is humanity subjected, by this one heinous offense! And, oh! how enormous the guilt, of such hideous self-destruction!

3. The guilt, of which man was convicted, for his "one offense," was that of questioning the veracity of the God of Truth; or, as one of the Sacred Writers plainly and emphatically expresses it, of "making God a liar." Had the denunciation of God, against the transgression of which man became guilty, been implicitly and fully credited by man, can we believe that he would have committed the offense? The supposition seems to us wholly unreasonable. And, how monstrous, on the testimony of a creature, such as the serpent must have seemed to the woman, to call in question the truth of the infinitely perfect Creator, to whom it was impossible to lie!

4. It was the guilt of ingratitude, against a Benefactor, who, without any view to personal advantage, had bestowed upon man his existence and all the various enjoyments which rendered that existence so perfectly happy. Men esteem ingratitude, for the little favors they can confer upon each other, and which, too often, are conferred from

very questionable motives, as among the blackest of the social offenses of which man can be guilty. How overwhelming, then, must have been the guilt of ingratitude to the purely benevolent "Giver of every good and perfect gift," of which man was made the favored recipient!

5. Finally, it is the guilt of rebellion against the rightful Sovereign of the universe. Who, that attributes universal creation to God, can question His absolute right to govern the universe? The right results, by the clearest and most indubitable consequences, from the act of Creation. The offense of man was a *practical* denial of this right—was opposition, direct opposition to it; and the principle of the offense was so clearly rebellion against God, as an attempt to dethrone Him, or to subvert His dominion would have been. The offense of man, then, however unimportant the act itself, abstractly considered, can be regarded in no other light than as of vast magnitude, of unutterable turpitude; as, whatever impugns the authority of the universal Sovereign violates and pours contempt upon the highest and most sacred obligation that can be predicated of any creature. And, who, contemplating the disturbance of order and harmony, in both the moral and physical world; the self-destruction of man; the insulting impeachment of the Divine veracity; the base ingratitude, and the flagrant rebellion involved in this "one offense of man," but must feel that no disastrous doom of the offender, could exceed the heinousness of his guilt?

The punishment awarded, to the condemned offender, was death—1. A privation of the favor and of the image of God, which constituted spiritual death, which if continued, would have been death eternal. 2. The seeds of

mortality were sown in the corporeal frame of the offender; and, we doubt not that, if there had been no interposition on behalf of man—if a ransom had not been found for him, the doom of mortality would have been consummated in him on the very day on which he transgressed; and, in that event, his ruin, in soul and body, would have been complete and irretrievable—he would have been delivered over to “the bitter pains* of eternal death.” Nothing can be more evident than that, in that case, the offspring of Adam and Eve would have shared in the punishment, in precisely the same way in which they participated in the offense. From all this, it appears that the “judgment unto condemnation” declared Adam and Eve guilty of personal and voluntary rebellion, and sentenced them to death, both physical and spiritual; and, that their posterity, being included in them, were involved in their guilt, and doomed to participate in their punishment, without being conscious of that guilt, or sensible to the pain of that punishment—just as they had been unconscious and without volition in the offense.

What a fall was this of man! From the favor of God, to be plunged into His displeasure! To be barred out from all intercourse and fellowship with Him, for the enjoyment of whom they were designed and qualified! To be driven out from His presence, which is life and joy to the spirits which are permitted access to it! To be stripped of immortality, and become the prey of worms and rottenness; and to have no prospect, beyond this life—so troubled, so brief and ending so fearfully—but what was overcast with threatening clouds of vengeance, ready to disgorge upon him their horrid contents, and whelm him in utter and eternal perdition! These were some of

the fearful consequences of an indulgence—for the gratification of an appetite, which, at best, could afford but a momentary pleasure, and to satisfy the cravings of an ambition, lawless and extravagant in its aspirations, were all these frightful and ever-during evils incurred. And, alas! how like our first parents are too many of us, their unhappy children! How common it is, that men rush upon all the horrors of eternal perdition, rather than to forego an indulgence, which they know beforehand will be quite unsatisfactory and can endure but a moment, or to balk an ambition, the success of which, they must know, will be wholly unsatisfying! We return, from these reflections, to the subject in hand. We have, in this discourse, dwelt chiefly on the judicial decision, upon the first transgression of man, and only hinted at the punitive consequences, moral and physical, to which the offenders had subjected themselves, by their transgression. These we design as the subjects of future investigation. It now remains,

III. *To vindicate the propriety of the judgment, we have been considering.*

In doing this, two points, entirely distinct in their nature and bearing, will require our attention.

1. Was the “judgment unto condemnation” proper, considered in relation to the actual offenders? We shall say the less on this point, as we have already had occasion to speak of the indisputable right of the Creator to test the fidelity of His creatures, by any rule of conduct He might see proper to prescribe; provided there be nothing in that rule essentially wrong. We have also observed, and, indeed, it follows, as a necessary consequence, from the doctrine just advanced, that it was the indispensable

duty of man to conform to the rule, which his lawful Sovereign had laid down for the government of his conduct. We now observe, further, that it was the unquestionable prerogative of the Sovereign to sanction His law by any penalty that might by Him be deemed proper and necessary to secure the objects of His government—provided the severity of the penalty should not transcend the magnitude of the guilt incurred, by transgressing the law, of which it was the sanction. We add, that it would be clearly just that that penalty should be inflicted on an offender; in as much as he lay under no necessity of perpetrating the offense, and was apprised of the consequences he should incur by his disobedience. It would be difficult, we think, to conceive of any penalty too severe for an offense, of so heinous a character and such aggravating circumstances as that which we are now considering. By the bounty of his Creator, man was surrounded by every enjoyment reason could ask or temperance enjoy. The prohibition, by which his fidelity was to be tried, was simple and of easy observance. The majesty and goodness of God ought equally to have restrained him from disobedience. He was apprised of the consequences which would result from transgression; and, hence, his gratitude, his loyalty, and his fears should have restrained him. Every influence, of passion, of reason and of religion, was arrayed in opposition to the licentious appetite which led him to sin. His transgression was pride, was intemperance, was ingratitude, was unbelief, was impiety. Who, then, can doubt the propriety of the “judgment unto condemnation,” so far as the actual offenders were concerned? Surely no one can entertain such a doubt, who is properly impressed with the claims which God has upon the fidelity

of His creatures—no one who is concerned for the purity of human morality and piety. We cannot hesitate a moment to pronounce the “judgment unto condemnation,” which went against our offending progenitors, perfectly equitable and proper.

2. The second point, which demands our consideration, is, ‘whether the “judgment unto condemnation,” as it concerned the unborn and unconscious posterity of the actual offenders, was according to strict propriety?’ Let us beg you to consider what we have said, in a former part of this discourse, on the *manner* in which their posterity were embraced in this “judgment unto condemnation.” It involved them in no more consciousness of guilt, threatened them with no more sense of the punishment, contemplated in the judgment, than they had had volition in the offense, which had incurred the judgment. And, if there was such an exact correspondence, between the want of personal agency in the commission of the offense, and the unconsciousness of guilt and suffering denounced by the judgment, it appears to us there does not attach the slightest censure to the judgment, as wanting in equity. We readily allow that, had Adam been allowed to propagate his posterity, while himself and they were under condemnation, for an offense in which they had had no voluntary participation,—in which case they must have been born to personal guilt and personal sufferings, as the consequences of that offense: then, there would have been crying injustice in the judgment. But, we contend that this *could not* have occurred under the administration of a Being, the “habitation of whose throne is justice and judgment.” That it did not occur in this case, we hope to make manifest on a future occasion. What concerns us

now is to acquit the Divine proceeding of injustice, in passing sentence of condemnation upon the unborn posterity of Adam and Eve, for the offense which these primogenitors of mankind committed; and this, we think, is done by the scriptural view we have taken of the *manner* in which their posterity were involved in that sentence.

We go farther, and insist that it was unavoidable that the posterity of the offenders should bear the same relation to the "judgment unto condemnation" and to the punishment denounced in it, that they bore to the offense itself. Being included in their parents, when these parents fell under the displeasure of God for their offense, and when they incurred the "judgment unto condemnation," it was impossible to place this included posterity out of the range of that judgment and of that punishment. But, we go still farther, and affirm, that there was much kindness in the arrangement, which embraced the offenders and their posterity in the same "judgment unto condemnation." Since, had not the latter been included in that judgment, it would have been impossible that they should have had any personal existence; as it is inconceivable that two guilty and corrupt rebels, against the Divine government, should be made the means of peopling the earth with a race of innocent, holy and loyal creatures, and, as, unless they were included in the condemnation, they could not share in any plan of recovery, devised in behalf of the guilty parents. But, on the supposition that God would put into operation a plan to restore the offending parents to the Divine favor, it would be of incalculable importance that their unborn posterity should so far participate in their condemnation, as to entitle them to share

in the benefits of that plan. In this way, and in no other of which we can conceive, could they have an actual personal existence. God, on this supposition, would have concluded them all in a state of condemnation, that He might have mercy upon them all. From all this, it appears to us that the judgment of God, which involved all men in this condemnation, for the offense of one, was, as are all His judgments, wise, and just, and good.

We shall now conclude with a few obvious reflections on the doctrines advanced:

1. It is certain, from the fact, that we, the offspring of offending Adam, do exist, that God has "found a ransom" for the offenders; as, unless such had been the case, he would have fallen at once into everlasting destruction, and we should have perished in him. And, as this is the case, we have each of us a probationary career to run for ourselves, and must each of us answer for his own conduct, in his own person, to the Righteous Judge. Sin is identical in its nature in all ages, and under all the dispensations of the Divine government. Wherever it is indulged, it will incur the "judgment unto condemnation," and will inflict death.

2. How diligently, if this be so, should we avoid sin, and how earnestly should we seek for deliverance from the guilt of sins already committed! How eagerly should we seek for deliverance from the dominion of those habits and corruptions which enslave us to this pernicious foe to God and man! Deliverance from sin is indispensably necessary, in order that we may, *here*, enjoy the approbation of God, and that we may be counted worthy, *at last*, to stand before the Son of man, and enjoy "the pleasures that are at His right hand forevermore."

DISCOURSE VIII.

THE MORAL AND PHYSICAL CONSEQUENCES OF MAN'S ORIGINAL TRANSGRESSION.

By one man, sin entered into the world, and death by sin.—Rom. v. 12.

IN our last discourse, we endeavored to lay before you a just, though imperfect statement of the original transgression of man, and to explain the fatal influence which that transgression had exerted upon the legal relation of the human race to the Deity. We represented man as violating a plain, an easy, a well understood command of his acknowledged and rightful Sovereign—having, at the time of doing so, the power to keep his allegiance to his God unviolated. We, farther, endeavored to show that the necessary consequence was that he was involved in condemnation; and that his posterity, as they were included in the transgression without their own volition, were included in the condemnation, without any consciousness of such condemnation. This, we attempted to prove was just, unavoidable and hypothetically benevolent; inasmuch as, unless they had been included in the condemnation, they could not have shared in any plan for the recovery of the actual transgressors, and as these transgressors could not have been the instruments of peopling the earth with a righteous posterity, to have excluded their offspring from a participation in the consequences of the crime, would

have precluded their personal existence altogether. On this occasion, we contemplate a more extended survey of the mischievous consequences of the first offense of man. Unfortunately for man and his posterity, what he suffered in his legal relation to God, was far from being all. There were real evils, of the most formidable character, both moral and physical, which followed in the train of this original transgression. And, let it be observed, that whatever evils should befall the actual offender, whether moral or physical, they must be entailed on his posterity; for, it is inconceivable that, without a continued miracle, any being should be able to propagate a race with qualities essentially different from his own. Let it be observed, however, that we do not speak of qualities which are accidental to an individual—as is the holiness, produced by the Spirit and grace of God—but of those which are constitutional in the nature of such individual. Thus: it is inconceivable that a being, naturally and constitutionally holy, should propagate a race of unholy, impure beings; or that one, naturally and constitutionally corrupt, should propagate a pure and holy offspring. This being premised, we shall now proceed to the investigation of the text; and shall attempt,

I. To show what that sin is which is mentioned in the text:

II. Explain the term death, and show that it was introduced into the world by sin, and,

III. We shall draw some obvious inferences from the doctrines advanced under these two heads of our discourse.

I. We are to attempt *to show what that sin is which is mentioned in the text.*

We begin our remarks on this point, by observing that we understand, by the term *sin*, as here employed, not sin in general, but that particular transgression of the Divine law, which was perpetrated by the federal head of the human race; whereby its moral nature was corrupted in its source—inducing that state of things indicated by the Sacred Writers, who, in speaking of the moral state of man, employ such phrases as “carnal mind”—“body of sin”—“old man, with his affections and lusts,” etc. The pestilential advent of sin into the world, and its universal diffusion throughout the moral nature of man, are abundantly evidenced by that moral depravity, that spiritual corruption which characterize human nature; and, which, among divines, have received the appellation of “original sin.” The existence of this depravity and corruption, of the moral and spiritual nature of man, whatever questions may have arisen in regard to its origin, and however the pride of philosophy may wince at the fact, are as undeniable as the existence of man. That we may the more readily understand the subject, it may not be amiss to define the term rendered *sin*, especially as it is a remarkably significant one. We are informed, by those who understand the etymology of the word, that it is borrowed from the practice of shooting with an arrow, and signifies *to miss the mark*. Its application to moral subjects is too obvious to need any particular exposition of it. Whatever falls short or flies wide of the object for which we were created, must, therefore, be sin. As, then, we were made to be happy and to glorify God, so far as we fail in either of these purposes, we miss the mark—we sin against the law of our being, and against its infinite Author. It will, upon examination, be found that, in reference to both of

these particulars, the human race are grossly perverted from the important purposes of their existence. Every individual, of that unfortunate race, exhibits a character derogatory to his Maker, and abounds in the most melancholy evidences that happiness is not, in his present condition, the result of his circumstances. His whole mind and conscience—his mental and moral powers are all perverted, debased, and defiled. And trouble is his natural inheritance. But, it will be proper, if not necessary, to consider this painful subject somewhat particularly; and,

I. The understanding of the natural man is darkened, so as to discern very imperfectly, if at all, the great truths of religion. The leading and all-important doctrine, that there is a God, is either rejected altogether, or received in a way that amounts to much the same thing. The idea of the Divine existence, which floats in the mind of the natural man, is so confused and faint, or so grossly erroneous, as to prevent any beneficial influence from its being entertained. The natural man has no abiding impressive conviction that there is a God, glorious in holiness, the “rewarder of them that diligently seek Him,” and the “revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.” His views of the Divine nature and government are superficial, transient and self-inconsistent. Men in this state, taking their character of Deity from the prevailing tone and temper of their own minds, and from the nature of the circumstances in which they happen to be placed, conceive of a God who is wholly indifferent to man, all kindness or all wrath; so that, at one time they are disposed to say with the contemptuous Pharaoh, “Who is the Lord, that *I* should obey His voice?” or, at another

time, to imagine, with those described by one of the Sacred Writers, that "God is altogether such an one as themselves," or that, if there be any difference, it is only in degree, not in quality. With what complacency may they not contemplate themselves while under this flattering persuasion! To be like God, is the highest point to which the ambition of a creature can possibly soar, and promises all the advantages that can be expected from the friendship of the Deity. This satisfaction is, to the natural man, extremely short-lived. Soon he languishes into the paralyzing opinion of Epicurus, "That God is too exalted to interest Himself in the little affairs of this insignificant world;" so that all things are, in his opinion, surrendered up into the hands of blind Chance or inexorable Fate, to be driven forward to a fortuitous result, or to be dragged by fatal necessity to a destiny, possibly favorable—probably otherwise—but certainly not under the direction of intelligence. What could be more gloomy than to imagine a world, such as ours, without the superintendence of a being, wise and powerful enough to preside over its movements and influence its destiny! None, surely, but the self-convicted rebel could relish a doctrine, fraught with such hideous consequences. At other times, the natural man is disposed to compliment the *benevolence* of the Deity, at the expense of every other moral perfection of His nature. 'Surely,' he will say, 'a Being of infinite goodness will not punish His frail, short-lived creature with eternal misery, for conduct to which the nature of that creature strongly inclined him—a conduct which in no way affects the interest or the happiness of the Creator.' He seems not to know that God is the guardian of the purity, order, harmony and happiness of

the universe; and that He is bound by the nature of that relation, to punish, in the most exemplary manner, every one whose course of conduct is calculated to impair any of those invaluable interests. Again, at other times, when misfortune and disappointment have soured his mind, the natural man views the Divine character through the gloomy medium of his own feelings, and bitterly complains that God is a hard master, an inexorable tyrant, who sinks every other quality in a gloomy determination to bow to His iron rule every creature that He has made—to exact of them an impracticable service, and then punish them with implacable and relentless cruelty for their unavoidable disobedience to His requirements. In a word, the Divine character is not steadily and consistently seen by the natural man, in its own light; but, is either mutilated or disguised, or seen in different lights at different times and in different circumstances. A steady, serious contemplation of God, “in his whole round of rays complete,” would render him too uneasy to allow of his indulging in it. The God of the Scriptures is quite too perfect and too much concerned in the transactions of man, to allow the natural man to be at ease with Him; and, hence, the avidity which he discovers to make or imagine unto himself gods like himself. It is true, however, that he can speculate on the Divine perfections, with clearness, precision and propriety, as he may on any other subject which the intelligence of others has brought under his notice; but, it is obvious, from his general conduct, as well as from the manner in which he appears to be affected by his speculations on this important subject, that his views of the Divine character are rather the stores of his memory than the fruits of his understanding, or the con-

victions of his judgment; and, of this, we are persuaded, he will himself be fully convinced, if he will calmly and impartially look into his own mind. Nay, at the very moment that he is eloquently descanting on the Divine perfections, his mind revolts from the theory his memory has enabled him to construct and defend so successfully. Indeed, such is the darkness and perverseness, of the understanding, in the natural man, so gross is his stupidity, in regard to Divine things, that not only the eloquence of others, but even his own, fails to produce a proper impression concerning the Deity; and, while others may be informed and profited, he retires from the exercise with no more real intelligence, on the subject he has discussed, than falls to the share of the school-boy, who has recited, from memory, an oration on the principles of eloquence. And, how should it be otherwise? Does not the Wisdom of God assure us that "the natural man understandeth not the things of the Spirit?"—that "he cannot know them because they are spiritually discerned?" The foregoing remarks, drawn from the experience of fallen humanity, in every situation in which it has been placed, is merely a comment on this declaration of the apostle. And, if the Divine character is misunderstood, by the natural man, is it at all surprising that the laws, the government, the providence and the grace of God should be misunderstood likewise? Is it not to be expected that, if we mistake the character of an agent, we shall err in estimating his actions?

The natural man does not more egregiously err, concerning God, than he does concerning himself. His estimate, of his own character and situation, is as wide from the truth, as self-inconsistent and as indistinct, as is that

which he has formed of the Divine nature and government. The ice-encircled regions of the South pole are not more truly a *terra incognita*, than is his own heart to the natural man. He knows neither the springs of his moral conduct, nor the proper character which belongs to it. In regard to his situation, he is equally in error — imagining it better, or worse, or, at least, different from what it really is, or making an appropriation of it which it was not intended and is not calculated to have. Let us be a little more particular, in our observation on this subject. How prone is the natural man “to think of himself more highly than he ought to think!” How commonly do men, whom grace has not renewed into conformity to God, arrogate to themselves a meritorious distinction on account of some quality which they imagine themselves to possess exclusively, or, at least, in a degree of perfection peculiar to themselves! And, indeed, there is hardly any man, no matter how deficient, but thinks himself to possess some advantage which sets him up above the rest of his species. The absurdity of this proud miscalculation would appear, in a strong light, could we exhibit the various pretensions to superiority which distinguish different men. Some ground their claims on extensive reach of thought, on sprightly genius, on quick perception, on a discriminating judgment, on a retentive memory, on the number of books they have read, or of the countries they have seen: — others, on a handsome person, a fine voice, great muscular power or activity: — others, on their succession to a title, the adventitious relation they bear to great men, the condescension of great men, in admitting them to their society, their own elevation to posts of honor, no matter whether they were raised to

them by their merit, came to them by accident, or wound their tortuous way into them, by the meanest sycophancy, the lowest intrigue or the vilest corruption:—others, on the possession of wealth, whether inherited from their parents, acquired by their own skill and honest industry, filched from the feeble hold of the ignorant and unsuspecting or wrung by extortion, from the needy and oppressed. Some claim a distinction for the dress they wear—perhaps for the color of a ribbon or the richness of a lace, the chasing of a bracelet or the brilliancy of its jewels: others, for their contempt of whatever other men admire; and some for their very vices. Not a few are proud even of their virtues, imperfect as they are; and value themselves for estimable moral qualities, in which there are few whom they excel. But, let the particular matter on account of which they think themselves advantageously distinguished be what it may, men are prone, not only to think they excel in it, but that excellence, in that particular matter, is to be preferred before any other. Such is the perversion of the understanding, in the natural man, with regard to his own character compared with that of other men!

Let us next examine his views of the character he bears in the sight of God. If he do not adopt the unguarded saying of Pope—

“In spite of pride, in erring Reason's spite,
“One truth is clear — whatever is, is right;”

with the licentious interpretation too often given of it, he will, at least, persuade himself that there is such a predominance of virtue in his principles, dispositions and conduct that, on the whole, he must stand approved by the Judge of all; or, that his peculiar regard for some one point, in religion or morals, must more than counterbalance

all his defects or aberrations in regard to other points.—He “pays tithes of mint, rue, anise and cummin;” and, therefore, supposes he may “neglect the weightier matters of the law, justice, mercy and the love of God.” Or, he is honest; that is, he pays all his debts, and may, therefore, dispense with the obligation to be merciful and pious. Or, he is benevolent; and justice and truth, temperance and piety are of so little comparative importance that their absence may be considered abundantly compensated by the presence of this commanding virtue. Another instance of the perversion of the understanding, in the natural man, is an almost universal proneness to strike out for itself a path, in religion and morals, distinguished by some absurdity so glaring as to be obvious to all observers, and to render it difficult, for those not involved in the error, to credit the sincerity of such as embrace it. This censure does not fall on those only whose means of information are so limited as not to allow of their forming correct notions on these subjects. It lights equally upon the men of reputation in the world for learning and wisdom: so that, you shall find men who are deeply skilled in Science, in Arts and Letters, grossly ignorant in religion and morals, and addicted to some incredible and preposterous superstition, at which even the vulgar revolt.

Once more: The false estimate, which is placed on the comparative importance of what concerns the present life and that which is to come, is a striking proof of the disordered state of the human understanding. We see men anxiously forming plans for temporal aggrandizement, watching patiently for favorable opportunities to execute those plans, plunging into difficulties, encountering toils and hardships, submitting to privations and exposing

themselves to formidable dangers, in striving to bring those plans to a successful issue. If they succeed, we see them elated; while all around them congratulate them on their success; but, if they fail, both they and their friends sink into melancholy and despondency. Such is the importance ascribed, by the natural man, to things of this life! But, the interests of the soul—the concerns of eternity are neglected and forgotten. If, however, the importance of being religious be forced upon the attention of unconverted men, they often retain so much indifference on the subject as to take up with the plan of religion adopted by their forefathers, without taking the trouble to examine whether or not it be according to truth and calculated to produce a happy result; and this second-hand plan of religion, they follow, in so heartless a manner, with so little concern what the issue will be, that they furnish abundant evidence that religion is viewed by them as a matter of mere social decency, or a thing of course, rather than as the condition on which their best interests are suspended. Compare the industry, the feeling, the anxiety which are so strikingly exhibited, in adventures that have worldly emolument for their object, with the sloth, the indifference, and the unconcern with which religious duties are performed; and you must see that a decided preference is given to the former. Could anything more strongly evince the weakness and perverseness of the natural man's understanding than this astonishingly false estimate! How justly has the poet described the absurdity of it in the following beautiful lines:—

"And, is it in the flight of threescore years
To push eternity from human thought!
To bury souls immortal in the dust!
A soul immortal wasting all its fires,

Spending its strength in strenuous idleness,
Thrown into tumult, raptured or alarm'd
At aught this scene can threaten or indulge,
Resembles Ocean into tempest wrought,
To waft a feather or to drown a fly."—*Dr. Young.*

The understanding being thus blinded and perverted, it follows as a necessary consequence, that the reasonings, drawn from its perceptions, must be vague, imperfect and frequently wrong; and, of course, the judgment to which they lead uncertain or unrighteous. Hence, also, errors in faith—errors of such capital importance, that, to them is ascribed, in the Sacred Scriptures, the final perdition of those who perish. Unbelief, or wrong belief is a natural fruit of a perverted understanding. The doctrine to be believed is misunderstood, or the evidences which support it are viewed in a superficial or partial manner, or are wholly overlooked; or objections, having no other weight than that which is imparted to them by passion and prejudice, are opposed to the evidence, and so an improper result is obtained, and either an erroneous interpretation is given to the doctrine, because it is misunderstood, or it is discarded altogether, from overlooking or weakening the evidence by which it is supported, or from allowing weight to objections which are the mere offspring of prejudice and passion.

Thus have we exhibited an imperfect, though, it is believed, a just view, as far as it goes, of the degeneracy and darkness of the mind of fallen man. Let us next turn our attention to the state of his heart—the seat of his passions, affections and volitions. In our investigations *here*, we shall be liable to frequent errors and embarrassing uncertainties; for the "heart is deceitful, above all things—who can know it?" This is one of its most prominent

characteristics. It deceives the man himself, in a thousand instances, secretly proposing to itself *one* motive for its choice and assiduously laboring to make it be believed that it is influenced by *another* of quite a different character. Thus the proud man will give his property, to forward charitable purposes, will devote himself to the service of his country, or, when it is fashionable, will be exemplary for his observance of religious duties, and will labor to make himself, as well as others, believe that he is influenced by benevolence, love of country and love of piety, when, in fact, his sole object is the praise of men. Simplicity and sincerity, though strangers to the heart of the natural man, are, nevertheless, affected by him; so that one would think, from his professions, as he himself often does, that nothing was farther from his purpose than practising a cheat. So extremely subtle are the deceitful workings of the unrenewed heart, that it requires much observation and skill to ascertain their precise character.

But, however deceitful and, therefore, difficult to be known the heart of the natural man may be, there are some of its characteristic operations too manifest to be concealed or disguised. One of these is its alienation from God. That the natural man loves not God, is a fact so obvious as to need no labored or farfetched evidence to prove it — a little attention to experience will sufficiently establish the fact. How seldom is God the object of his thoughts! With what eagerness and facility is the thought of Him extruded from the mind, to give room for other and more agreeable meditations! How cold, how exanimate are the sensations excited by the idea of God, which is casually thrown into the mind, by some extraneous agency! How slight is the interest that is taken, in what

concerns His honor or the accomplishment of His will! And, is this the way we are affected towards a beloved object? O, no! With what delight do we call up and dwell upon it! How unwillingly exchange our meditations on that subject, for any other that could occupy the mind! How glowing and animated the feeling raised in the mind by such meditations! And how jealous are we, in regard to everything which concerns the honor or the advantage of those we love! Nothing is considered hard, which we can do, that will advance either. Can the natural man doubt, for one moment, that he is without love to God, after examining himself by these criteria? He must see that he has not one of the marks which distinguish those who love Him. He must see that he is alienated from God in his affections. But, he not only does not love God, he is moreover inimical to Him. Abstractly, he may not be conscious that he is an enemy to God; but, relatively, in regard to His laws, His providence, and His grace, he proves himself to be, and must himself be aware that he is, to all intents and purposes, an enemy of the most decided and inveterate character. He presumptuously disobeys the Divine law, and revolts at the sanctions by which it is enforced — repines at such dispensations of providence as disappoint his hopes, impair his prosperity or inflict upon him suffering — and slights or rejects the Divine plan of salvation. And, indeed, how should it be otherwise, since he is under the influence and control of that "carnal mind," which "is enmity against God," which "is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be?"

Love of the world is another striking feature, in the character of the natural man. By love of the world, we

are not to understand that degree of regard to the things of the world which is necessary to our seeking a competent and even comfortable subsistence. But, we are to understand a fond attachment to the wealth, the honors and the pleasures of the world—a dependence on them for happiness—a devotion of our attention and our affections to them. That the world predominates in the heart of the natural man, is a truth of such notoriety that to prove it would be an insult to any reflecting man.

But strong as the love of the world may be, it is a subordinate passion. Love of self is the paramount passion in the unrenewed heart. This, however, is sinful only when it is excessive in degree, or perverse in its operation. When it takes the place of the superior affection which God, our Creator, Preserver and Redeemer justly claims of us, it becomes excessive. When it interferes with our moral or religious duties, or with the rights of others, it is perverse in its operation. And, who will deny that it is both excessive in degree and perverse in its operation in every fallen, unrenewed man? None, surely, who have witnessed with how little ceremony God and His law are affronted, or, at least, disregarded—the rights of other men infringed and even outraged,—and moral and religious duties disregarded and left unperformed, if they be not repudiated, for the sake of even a momentary indulgence of appetite or passion, or the gratification of merely a whim!—none, surely, who have witnessed the gross irreligion, the insolent pride, the peevishness, the griping parsimony or the sordid intemperance which disgrace human nature!

Consequent on this depravity of the passions, is the corruption and the perverseness of the Will, in the natural

man. That which is most loved will be chosen, even though the understanding should be so far enlightened as to see the impropriety of the choice, and though conscience should loudly remonstrate against it. Self and the world are chosen, as his portion, by the natural man; while God and righteousness are rejected by him. This choice is not made casually, and under the influence of some extraordinary temptation, but habitually and obstinately, and against the clearest dictates of reason, and the most pressing remonstrances of conscience: so, that, it is frequently the case that, though men see and "approve things that are excellent;" and, by the most decided assent of the mind, "serve the law of God;" yet, with their flesh—their carnal natures,—their corrupt affections, their perverse wills, they "serve the law of sin." Whoever has attempted to reduce himself into subjection to reason and religion, has found, by painful and repeated experience, that the most formidable obstacle that lay in his way was the perverseness of his own will: so that the justness of the reason assigned, by our blessed Saviour, for the perdition of His disobedient hearers—"ye *will not* come unto me, that ye might have life"—is made evident, by what he finds in the workings of his own heart. And, indeed, this is the last of the faculties of the soul that is rectified by grace. Light comes into the understanding of men—their judgments are rectified, but, they love, they choose darkness, as more congenial with the evil, the perverse propensity of their nature. Thus: the *whole man* is corrupted—"Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart is evil continually." Or, if, in the unrenewed heart there be found any tendency to good, any desire for moral good, it results not from the nature of him in whom

it is found to exist, but from that “grace of God, which bringeth salvation, which hath appeared unto all men”—from the motions of the Holy Spirit in our spirits, which “worketh in us, to will and to do of His good pleasure.” That such “a manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man, to profit withal,” we shall have occasion to show, at some length, on a future occasion. At present, we barely state the fact, that, in describing the fatal influence of the “one offense,” upon the moral condition of man, we may not be thought to have exaggerated the gloom of its melancholy history. The truth is, that *total depravity*, utter moral ruin was the consequence of that “one offense;” though, under a dispensation of recovering grace, we now see no instance of utter moral ruin, except in cases where men have resisted and “grieved the Holy Spirit” till He has withdrawn His gracious influence, and left them to hardness of heart and reprobation of mind, to work out their own damnation with greediness.

We have presented the foregoing view of human nature, as a standing proof that “sin entered into the world”—that it took hold on the whole mass of humanity, defiling, corrupting and destroying the whole. Man, having been created in the image of God, exhibited, and could exhibit none of that intellectual darkness, none of that moral corruption, in the affections and passions, none of that perverseness of will which we have ascribed to the natural man. But, “sin entered the world;” and, at once, “all the foundations” of man’s moral nature, “were out of course.” And, this moral disorder still continues—a sad memento, a humiliating monument of the transgression of the Divine law, by the progenitors of the human family, while yet that whole family were contained in them. And,

never can the entrance into the world, or the virulence of sin be rationally questioned, while mankind are characterized, as they now are, by blindness of mind, corruption and hardness of heart, perverseness of will—selfishness, worldliness and alienation from God.

II. We are to show that, *by sin, death entered into the world.*

Death is the effect of sin, not in the same way that physical phenomena are the effects of the physical causes by which they are produced, but by means of a connection, between sin and death, depending wholly upon the will of Him who established that connection. Physical effects are produced immediately and necessarily by the operation of some quality in the nature of their cause; but the effects of moral causes are produced by the agency of some power, having control over the subjects of those effects. Thus: punishments are the effects of crimes; but, those punishments are not produced by the crimes themselves, but these crimes are the causes or reasons for which the punishments are inflicted by some power, having competent jurisdiction over the criminal. Death entered the world by sin, not as its physical effect, but as a punishment inflicted by the Lawgiver, for the violation of His law.

But, what is death? This is a most important and interesting inquiry; and we answer it *generally*—that death is a privation of life, and, more particularly,

1. That it is, to the soul of man, a privation or destitution of God, who is the life of the soul. It is a privation of His favor, and of the happiness consequent on the enjoyment of it. The experience of all men in all ages has gone to establish, beyond dispute, the position — that

this world is not capable of affording happiness to man. Place man in any imaginable situation, in relation to earthly good — combine around him all the advantages of health, of fortune, of fame and of friends, and, if he has no more than this, he will still find an aching void in his heart. Dr. Watts spoke the experience of all people, when he said,

" Were I possessor of the earth,
And called the stars my own,
Without Thy graces and Thyself,
I were a wretch undone."

The enjoyment of the Divine favor is to be regarded, then, as the proper, nay, the *only* happiness of man. Privation of the Divine favor involves the loss of communion of the soul with God; for, it is inconceivable that God should admit to communion with Himself, such as had, by their sins, cast themselves out from His favor. Communion with God implies the greatest honor, the highest dignity to which any creature could be elevated. Men, of inferior station have great ambition to be noticed by those in exalted positions, and to be admitted to free and unrestrained intercourse with them. But, how slight the honor, of standing in the presence of kings, emperors and presidents, and of easy and unembarrassed intercourse with them, compared to that of communion with the King of kings and Lord of lords! Again: privation of Divine favor involves the loss of that consciousness of absolute security, which an assurance of Divine protection produces, in the mind of those upon whom "the light of His countenance shines." In a word, privation of God, is what is commonly called spiritual death; and the perpetuity of this privation would be eternal death:—it is

the death of the soul — God, being as necessary to the security, the dignity and the happiness of the soul, as the soul is to the activity and sensibility of the body. This death followed, immediately upon the entrance of sin into the world. God, offended by the transgression of His creature, withdrew from him the smiles of His face. God was holy : sin rendered man unholy ; and, so, sin separated between man and God. Communion between them was broken off — the protection of God was no longer assured to the rebel, and the happiness resulting from the Divine favor, was wrecked. What a death ! How fearful ! But, not only was spiritual death the consequence of sin, man, by its fatal influence, became,

2. Subject also to physical death. We consider this position susceptible of the clearest proof from the sacred Scriptures. Treating, formally and exclusively, of the resurrection of the body, St. Paul says: "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ, shall all be made alive." Now, if the resurrection of the body be not the result of natural causes, operating in the constitution of human nature, but solely a fruit of the mediatorial relation of Christ to the human race, then, if there be any congruity in the cases put by the apostle, the death of the body was not the result of natural causes, operating in the constitution of human nature, but was brought upon that nature by the proper agency of Adam. Had death been an original provision, in the organization of man, there would have been gross impropriety in the assertion that "in Adam all die." It would not have been *in Adam*, but in the purpose and ordination of Adam's Creator, that all died. The apostle's double affirmation ascribes death to Adam, *as its cause*, as clearly and as fully as it ascribes the resurrection

to Christ, *as its cause*. Further: we cannot conceive, if death were not caused by the sin of our first parents, why there was any necessity for Christ to accomplish the resurrection of the dead. He, as the second Adam, came "to put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself"—to "redeem man from under the curse of the law"—to "destroy the works of the Devil." Now, if death be not the fruit of sin, why should He put away its dominion over its captives — made such by the original laws of human organization? Why should He "ransom man from death?" Why should He destroy death? His mission to earth was not for the purpose of *instating* man in new privileges, but, for the purpose of *re-instating* him in the privileges which were forfeited by sin. Hence, He is called "the repairer of the breach"—the "Redeemer"—the "Saviour." His offices all have reference to the injuries sustained by man in consequence of sin. And, this, by no means comports with His being "the resurrection" to man, if death was not the fruit of sin. Until very recently, the opinion was, we believe, almost unanimous, among those who received the Scriptures as a Divine Revelation, that the mortality of the human race was among the fearful consequences of the first transgression of man; and we can conceive no other cause for modern dissent to it, but that excessive deference to the acumen of philosophy, which has discredited more than half of that Revelation, because its utterances are above the capacity of the human mind — not to understand, but to comprehend. We, however, are old-fashioned enough to receive the teachings of God in their plain import, whether we are or are not capable of understanding the whole that concerns them. For instance, we believe in the *facts* —

that the lame, the leper and the deaf man were relieved by the word of the Saviour; though we cannot philosophically trace out the connection between the Word and its effects in these facts. So, also, we believe that "death entered the world by sin; and so death passed upon all men;" and, that it was "in Adam," not in the laws of the organization which the Creator gave to man, that "all died."

It is urged, that, if physical death was a part of the penalty incurred by the original transgression of man, the terms, in which that penalty was threatened, were not verified by the event. "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die," was the fearful denunciation. Yet, man lived many days after he sinned. We say nothing of the different rendering of the original text, of which the learned tell us this threatening is susceptible—intimating, as we think, the beginning, not the completion of the process of death. We are satisfied with the text, as it is, in reference to our present purpose, and contend that the import of the threatening is amply borne out by the fact, that man, naturally immortal, became, on the day that he sinned, not only death-doomed, but subject to tendencies leading inevitably to death. But, were not this a sufficient disposition of the difficulty in question, the fact of the *instant* mediation of the Son of God, and the indispensable necessity that man should not die at once, in order to the carrying into effect of the design of that mediation, were ample grounds for suspending the sentence, which would, doubtless, have been carried into *full* effect immediately, had not the mediation been interposed. He, who said to David, the men of Keilah "will deliver thee up," to Saul, implied, though he did not

express the condition of David's remaining in Keilah; and, therefore, though the men of Keilah did not deliver up David into the hands of Saul, the truth of the Divine affirmation cannot, with justice, be impugned. So, though God threatened death to man, in the very day of his transgression, yet, as the mediation of the Son of His love was interposed, the truth of the threatening, in regard to the penalty even had that penalty been wholly remitted, instead of being only suspended, would not have been impeachable. Who impugns the truth of a Judge, who denounces death, to be inflicted at a certain hour, upon a convicted murderer, when the Executive authority is interposed to pardon or respite the culprit? No one thinks of doing so; and, surely, God has a clearer right to exercise such a prerogative than any human sovereign can arrogate to himself. We think it now sufficiently established that death, with all the diseases and sufferings which are its harbingers and attendants, are the consequences of that sin which, by man, was brought into the world. The predisposing influences, on which the final consequence depends, are to be ascribed, equally with that consequence, to the cause from which it results. How numerous, how complicated and how dreadful, then, the evils which followed in the train of sin, on its entrance into the world! It remains,

III. To conclude with some *inferences* and *reflections*.

1. If sin has entered into the world, and defiled the whole man, how egregiously mistaken are those who indulge a fond conceit of the rectitude, the purity and the dignity of their own natures! How amazing the self-deception, which men practice, in giving such a coloring to their vices, and throwing such a veil over the corrup-

tions of their own hearts, as to persuade themselves that, let the condition of others be as deplorable as it may, they, at least, deserve none of the severe censures, written in the word of God against the natural man! These, certainly, "love darkness rather than light." These have surely accustomed the eyes of their understanding to the worse than midnight gloom of that "darkness which hath covered the earth, and that gross darkness which envelopes the minds of the people that know not God." To such we would say, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light!" Open thine eyes; for, now "the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world," is shining around thee, to discover to thee, not only the true character of thy evil deeds, which have, heretofore, kept thee from coming to the light—not only the dangers that surround thee, and the fearful prospect of that perdition which awaits thee, for thy sins, but, also, the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, in which thou mayest read that mystery of redemption, that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself," making provision for the salvation of all, who, through the light He affords them, will look for it to HIm by faith. O, then, no longer court ignorance, either of thyself or of thy God; but, now, yield to the salutary though painful influence of that light, which will expose to thine own view all the deformity and danger to which sin has subjected thee. For, until thou hast this discovery made to thee, thou wilt not be prepared for the revelation of the unspeakable goodness of God, in giving His Son to be a propitiation for thy sins, without which, thou canst never exercise that faith, upon which is suspended the salvation of thy soul.

2. If sin have separated between us and God, our spiritual life and comfort, it is impossible, in the nature of things, that our union with Him should ever be restored, unless sin be destroyed, unless we be purified and renovated in our moral natures. In order to this, we must, by self-denial and by bearing our cross, "mortify the deeds of the body," in conjunction with the influences of that Spirit, "which lusteth against the flesh;" whose office it is to "cleanse the thoughts of our hearts," and "change us, from glory to glory," into the glorious image of Him who created us, "in righteousness and true holiness." This powerful operation of the Divine Spirit will not be performed, unless we be "workers together with Him," as well as believers on Jesus Christ, with hearts unto righteousness. O, then, let us, with all diligence, mark and follow the leadings of the Holy Spirit, joining with Him, in irreconcilable opposition to the whole bent of our carnal natures; and let us look, by faith, for continual assistance from Him, in this all-important struggle.

3. If not only spiritual death, or the loss of the favor God and communion with Him, but pain, disappointment, disease and mortality are the consequences of sin, how heinous must be its character in the sight of the infinitely benevolent God! How malignant its influence upon those, who subject themselves to its power! And how extreme the folly, nay, the madness, of those who cherish it in their bosom! Is it thus we treat the most inconsiderable hostility of a fellow-creature? Is it thus we connive at the most trivial inroads of the slightest disease? Or, does the magnitude of the evils, which sin inflicts upon its victims, give it prerogative to exact our submission and a claim upon our affections? We know

that it is a maxim, the heavier the burden, under which a slave is made to groan, the securer are the fetters by which he is bound. This is a first principle in the system of every tyrant. Are we then, slaves to sin? Doing the drudgery of that vilest of monsters? And, shall our wages be naught but shame, and pain, and death? O, let us no longer "yield our members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin;" but, let us look to the Son of God, that He may emancipate us from the dominion of this fell monster, that we may "be free indeed." Being thus delivered from "the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the sons of God," we shall pass through all the ills of life, not only in safety, but even with advantages growing out of those very ills. We shall triumph in death; and, finally, when "the dead in Christ shall be raised incorruptible," the very last effect of sin shall be removed, and we shall be united, in the most intimate manner, to God, the life of our souls and the source of all consolation; while the tenure, on which we hold our happiness, shall be secure as the throne of God, and lasting as His own eternity.

DISCOURSE IX.

THE INCARNATION OF DEITY IN THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST.

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, also, Himself, likewise, took part of the same; that, through Death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil; and deliver them, who, through fear of death, were, all their life time, subject to bondage. For, verily, He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.—*HEBREWS*, ii, 14-16.

IN our two last Discourses, we have contemplated man in his disobedience, his condemnation and his ruin. Disgrace, guilt and misery constituted the wretched portion which he had procured for himself, by his ungrateful rebellion against his Creator, his Benefactor and his rightful Sovereign. The *past* was, to him, the scene of degradation, infamy and guilt—the *present*, of regret and remorse, of loss, suffering and despair; while the *future* loomed up before him in all the horrors of undefinable woe, immittigable and without end! The slightest knowledge of himself, and of his relation to his offended Sovereign, must have rendered him utterly hopeless of ever conciliating the Divine favor, or of averting, or even of mitigating the calamities he had accumulated upon himself, by anything he could either do or suffer. Nor could he hope that any creature of God either could or would interpose in his behalf. What creature could be expected to commiserate the condition of man—miserable as it was—when it should be remembered that that

misery was incurred by man himself, wantonly and perversely, by his ingratitude to, and his rebellion against, the Being to whom he himself was under obligation for existence and all its blessings? Or, if it might be supposed that such compassion could arise in the bosom of any creature, what could it avail man? Where could be found, among creatures, even the best and the mightiest, the ability to propitiate the Deity in man's behalf, or to extricate man from the complicated ruin, in which he had involved himself? All that any creature possessed, whether of worth, or wisdom, or power, was derived from God, and was due to Him, in its utmost exercise. There was, then, nothing that any creature could appropriate to the purpose of averting the Divine wrath from rebellious man, without manifestly robbing God of His just right, by such appropriation. Hence it was that, among all creatures, there was no eye to pity — no arm to deliver man. Indeed, all loyal subjects of the Divine government would necessarily be arrayed against man, as a *traitor* to their own liege Sovereign. Hopeless in himself, hopeless in his fellow-creatures, of all ranks and of all worlds — the universe arrayed against him — under the curse of the Divine law — degraded, corrupted, ruined — such was the miserable condition of man, as a transgressor of the Divine law!

But, his condition was not irremediable — was not hopeless. There was an eye that could and did pity him. There was an arm that could be and was made bare to save him. Where least he might have expected such pity, such help, there they were to be found. The infinite Sovereign, whose law he had transgressed; the bounteous Benefactor, towards whom he had been so basely ungrateful; the Holy One, who cannot look upon sin with

allowance, and in whose eyes man had rendered himself loathsome—He, it was, who had compassion on man! He, it was, who “found a ransom” for man! He, it was, who made bare His arm, for the rescue of man from sin and from its horrible consequences! This would have been enough to tax, to the utmost, the capabilities of man, for a grateful return, had the mercy, vouchsafed by Him to man, been shown in the mere exercise of sovereign prerogative. But, how much stronger the claim, on man’s gratitude, since the exhibition of that mercy involved the profoundest condescension and the greatest sacrifice ever witnessed in the universe! “God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son,” to be “a propitiation for the sins of the world”—to “bear, in His own body on the tree,” the infliction due to man’s transgression. The sacrifice of His Son, by “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,” was not an arbitrary devotement of the Son by the Father; for, the Son was a voluntary party to the transaction—freely and cheerfully giving Himself up to this stupendous act of intervention, for the salvation of mankind—“Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet, for your sakes, He became poor, that ye, through His poverty might be rich.” It is of the part which the Filial Divinity performed, in the salvation of ruined man, that our text exhibits the initial step and the outline. It but presents an outline—not entering into the details of that stupendous performance, but merely exhibiting to us the great Actor Himself, with His important end in view, and preparing Himself for its accomplishment, by a condescension and magnanimity never equaled. We shall, in the discussion of the subject, endeavor,

- I. To ascertain of whom it is that the apostle predicates the action spoken of in the text;
- II. To understand the character of the action which is ascribed to this Actor; and,
- III. We shall consider the necessity and the purposes of that action, and the manner in which those purposes were effected.

I. We are to endeavor to ascertain of whom it is that the apostle predicates the action spoken of in the text.

1. It is clearly manifest, from the text, as well as from many other scriptures, that the Actor, spoken of in this place, was *not* a man. To suppose the contrary, would involve the absurdity of man's taking upon himself the nature of man, that he might be liable to man's destiny—an absurdity so gross that to argue against the supposition involving it, would be an insult to the most ordinary understanding. The only question is, whether the supposition, that the Actor spoken of in the text was man, does involve this absurdity. To put this question to rest, it is only necessary to cite the text, and a few similar portions of Scripture—"Forasmuch as the children (he is evidently speaking of the human race) are partakers of flesh and blood, *He, also, likewise, took part of the same; that, through death, He might,*" etc. "The Word was *made flesh*, and dwelt among us." "God sent forth His Son, *made of a woman, made under the law*, to redeem them that were under the law." He, the Word, the Son, is, in all these places, spoken of as existing *before His assumption of human nature*, and as existing in a state of *proper personality*. To suppose, then, that, when He was thus spoken of He was *a man*, involves the absurdity in question most palpably. And, as it involves that

absurdity, it must be rejected by every man, who is capable of understanding the terms in which it is stated.

We have stated that the Actor, spoken of in our text, existed previously to His assumption of humanity, in a state of proper personality. This we infer from the fact that reasoning, volition and action are ascribed to Him, in this pre-existent state. Are not all these clearly ascribed to Him, in ascribing to Him an action, accounted necessary because of the nature of man, and in order to the accomplishment of ulterior purposes in behalf of man? *Forasmuch as* the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, also, Himself, likewise, *took* part of the same. Observe! it is not said that 'He was endowed with human nature,' but that He took it. The act was His own proper act; and, He performed it, upon His own volition, and from His own regard to the reasons why it must be done, in order to the accomplishment of the purposes contemplated in doing it. Must He not, then, have *reasoned*, and *willed*, in entering upon this action? And, if so, must He not have existed in a state of proper personality?

2. Was He, then, a *creature*, of some order other than man? Many have adopted this supposition. Why have they adopted it? Is it because the clear teaching of the Bible—the only authority in the matter—inculcates it? Or, is it because the instruction on the subject, though obscure and difficult of being understood, favors it? It is neither of these; for neither of these suppositions is true; but it is, as we apprehend, because the pride of human philosophy is shocked at the unequivocally enunciated fact, that "God was manifest in the flesh;" and, consequently, men have subjected the Divine teachings,

on the subject, to the most torturing criticism, in order to soothe their own cruel mortification, at feeling their inability to range this teaching under the banner of their philosophical dogmas. The difficulty is, however, only shifted by this management—not in the slightest degree lessened. If there is something above the utmost elevation of man's reason and beyond the greatest stretch of human comprehension, in the voluntary assumption of human nature by the Divinity, is there less difficulty in comprehending how a created person, no matter of what grade, or with what creature-powers, could incarnate himself in humanity? And, yet, this is the only alternative, unless we deny either the incarnation itself, or the pre-existent personality of the nature incarnated, in the face of the clearest teachings of the Bible. Our measure of knowledge may not be such as to justify us in pronouncing it impossible that one creature should take into union with its own—such as that which subsisted in the incarnation—the nature of another species of creatures, so as to form an individual personality in such union. But we apprehend it to be much easier to ascribe the power to do this to the Creator of all things, whose resources are infinite, than to conceive of its belonging to any creature.

3. But, we are not left to depend upon the doubtful results of metaphysical reasonings on this important point. We are unmistakably taught that the pre-existing person, who incarnated Himself in Jesus Christ, was "The Son of God,"—"The Only-begotten of the Father"—"The Word, which, in the beginning, was with God;" and, who was, as we think we have sufficiently proven, in the *third* Discourse in this series, **VERY AND TRUE GOD**—the Second Person in the Trinity in Unity of the Godhead. We do

not deem it necessary to enter *here* into the proof of this most important doctrine, as we consider it sufficient to refer to the arguments advanced in the Discourse to which we have referred. Thus believing, we shall be excused, we trust, for considering it settled that the Actor, spoken of in our text, was God the Son, the equal of the Father and of the Holy Ghost, in self-existence, eternity and wisdom, in power, in presence, in holiness, in goodness and in righteousness. Having infinite freedom and right to choose and act, according to the counsels of His own wisdom, and able, in the employment of His own proper resources, to accomplish any purpose, which, under the impulse of His goodness, His wisdom should devise. So that the utmost confidence, in the success of an enterprise, undertaken by Him, is fully warranted.

II. We are to endeavor to understand the character of the action which is ascribed, in the text, to this Actor.

“Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, also, Himself, likewise, took part of the same —He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham.” The assumption of human nature, then, is the action in question. There are *three* very dissimilar theories on this subject, which, respectively, have had their advocates. These we think it proper to consider; and,

1. It has been contended that the *humanity*, assumed by the Divinity, in the person of Jesus Christ, was *illusory* —an unsubstantial *appearance* of humanity merely. The only authority for this opinion, we suppose, is the declaration that Christ “appeared in the likeness of sinful flesh;” and it is argued that, if He appeared in the *likeness of sinful flesh*, He did not appear in that flesh itself, as it

would be incorrect to call anything the *likeness of itself*. We suppose that this form of expression was adopted simply to mark the difference of the Saviour's humanity, from that of every other individual of the human family *in one particular alone*: viz., in its being, as we are elsewhere informed it is, "without sin." The passage quoted does not say that 'He appeared in the likeness of *human nature*,' but "in the likeness of sinful flesh." He did *not* appear in the likeness of human nature in its *unfallen state*; for His humanity was not exempt from disease and mortality, as that humanity was. He *did* appear in the likeness of *sinful flesh*; for His humanity was subject to the infirmities, diseases and mortality, to which sinful flesh was subject. His humanity, though a substantial reality, was but a *likeness of sinful flesh*; inasmuch as it was "without sin." If any dependence is to be placed on language, and if there was not a studied intention on the part of the New Testament-writers to deceive their readers, then, the humanity of our Saviour was not a *mere* appearance—an optical illusion, but a substantial reality. His birth, His growth, His actions, His speech, His hunger, thirst, fatigue and sleep, and, in particular, His sufferings, death, and resurrection from the dead, all proclaim His humanity a reality. Nor, we presume, would the contrary supposition have ever entered into the mind of any man, were it not that the mystery of the Divine incarnation, in human nature, is so far above the comprehension of the human mind, as utterly to baffle the efforts of the acutest and profoundest philosopher who ever attempted to define or explain it. And, we well know that there are those who affect to repudiate almost every fact and doctrine *in theology*, which they conceive to be incomprehensi-

ble; notwithstanding they are hourly conversant with innumerable admitted facts equally incomprehensible, in their own experience, and in the phenomena of both physical and spiritual nature around them. And, whence is this, but from the enmity of the carnal mind which is so irreconcilable to the law, the government, and the grace of God?

2. The second theory is, that the humanity, in which the Divinity was incarnated, in the person of Jesus Christ, was, in its physical and spiritual properties, exactly similar to the humanity of man, in his original state; but, being itself the production of an act of *real creation*, it could not be part and parcel of that humanity. Now, we have no authority, anywhere, for pronouncing the production of the humanity of Christ any more than that of any other individual of the human race, an act of creation. It is merely a metaphysical conclusion, derived from the peculiar circumstances attending its conception in the womb of the virgin-mother. Had it been produced by an act of creation, why, we would respectfully ask, was it necessary to provide for it a mother, any more than a father among men? Why was not that humanity created, as was Adam, without any maternal matrix? Could the mere deposition of the newly-created humanity in the womb of virginity establish any consanguinity between it and the human race? No more, certainly, than to have been produced *in* the atmosphere would have made the partaker of that humanity a son of air! Nothing can be clearer, we think, than that, if the humanity of Christ was produced by a distinct act of real creation, it can have no proper affinity to the humanity of man, no matter how exactly it may resem-

ble that humanity in all its physical and spiritual properties. It is not, on this supposition, and cannot be of that “*one blood*” of which God “hath made all men,” who “dwell on all the face of the earth,” but is of a distinct species; yet, the whole tenor of Revelation, both in the Old and in the New Testaments, represents the Messiah as *of* the human family. His genealogy is traced through a long line of ancestors, to Adam. He is declared to be “*of the seed of Abraham*”—“*of the house of David*”—“*Son of man*”—He is “*the seed of the woman*”—“*the offspring of David*.” We are notified that He was only “*supposed to be the Son of Joseph*,” but are assured that he *was* the Son of Mary. And, all this we are taught, without any, the slightest intimation that we are to understand that His humanity was produced by a distinct act of *real creation*. Was it, then, the intention of the sacred writers to mislead their readers; or, is the humanity of the Saviour, contrary to the theory we are now combatting, the *bona fide* offspring of Adam, through a long line of his descendants? *We* cannot hesitate as to which of these opinions ought to be embraced.

3. The third theory, which *we* heartily adopt, is that the humanity, in which the Divinity was incarnated, in the person of Jesus Christ, was a part of that humanity which was propagated by Adam, the primogenitor of the human race. This, we think, is unequivocally and strongly affirmed in our text—*He took PART of the SAME flesh and blood, of which the children, to be rescued, are PARTAKERS*—not a nature *like theirs*, but a *part* of the *same* nature. If it was a part of the same nature, which was propagated by Adam, and transmitted through his descendants to Jesus Christ, it was not the naturally pure, perfect, health-

ful and immortal nature, which Adam had before his transgression, but the contaminated, disordered, diseased and mortal nature, which resulted from that transgression. No descendant of fallen Adam, no one who was of the seed of Abraham, no son of David could derive any other than *such* a nature from *such* progenitors. If, in anything, the nature of Christ's humanity differed from that of the rest of mankind, the difference was not *proper to that nature*, but was superinduced by an agency external to itself. It *did* differ, in a most material particular—it was "without sin." The moral taint, which had diffused itself throughout the whole mass of humanity, was not found in the humanity of Christ. Was this constitutional and proper to that humanity? We think not. He who alone can cleanse away the defilement of sin, and who accomplishes that great work in the case of all men, who finally attain to everlasting life, could, and, we humbly presume, did purify that *part* of humanity which the Divinity took into union with Himself, in the incarnation. The Incarnate One, speaking by the mouth of the prophetic Psalmist, says, as quoted *Heb.* X. 5, "a body hast Thou prepared me;" and He says, in his own person, that "the Father had sanctified Him and sent Him into the world." If, as our text assures us, the Divinity, in His incarnation, "took part of the same flesh and blood, of which the children were partakers," that part must have necessarily been contaminated in the mass of humanity from which it was taken; and, as that humanity was, in the man Christ Jesus, "without sin," it must have been "prepared," by "sanctification of the Spirit" for the inhabitation of the Divinity.

How strikingly does this fact—the assumption of fallen

humanity, in the incarnation—illustrate the apostle's representation of the humiliation and privation, as well as the kindness of God incarnate! “Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet, for your sakes, He became poor, that ye, through His poverty, might be rich.” What language is adequate to the expression of this humiliation and privation! Had He, who was the “brightness of His (the Father's) glory, the express image of His person”—who “thought it not robbery to be equal with God,” assumed to Himself the nature and dignity of an archangel, though the condescension would have been infinite, He would not, by that act, have “made Himself of no reputation”—His assumed nature would have had unfallen rectitude, purity, that had never been sullied, and high official dignity—high, though derived. Or, had He assumed any rational and moral nature, that had never been contaminated, no matter how lowly the grade of that nature in the scale of rational and moral being, there would have been inherent moral excellence, to elevate that nature to intrinsic dignity. But, to “appear in the likeness of sinful flesh”—to take part of the flesh and blood, of which the children are partakers, which had been sin-defiled, in the original transgression, and which needed to be prepared, by sanctification, ere it was fit for His assumption—to be “made under the law”—to be “made sin for us”—*this* was humiliation, indeed! *This* was impoverishment, astounding to imagination, staggering to faith! So stupendous, that thousands perish, in their guilt and personal helplessness, rather than believe a truth so utterly above human ideas of philanthropy. Yet, all this, or the Bible is a fable, was done by the Second Person in the adorable

Trinity, for the sole purpose of redeeming rebels against the Divine government, from under the curse of the law, violated by them. This is grace, indeed! This is not only “unexampled love,” but, in absence of the fact, would be *inconceivable* kindness. And, indeed, it is easier to believe that God has shown such kindness to man, than it would be for man to conceive of such kindness, without the *fact* to originate the conception. And, if, to enrich man with eternal blessedness, the Son of God *thus* humbled himself—*thus* made himself of no reputation—*thus* became poor, how grateful should his beneficiaries be to Him! How devotedly should they love Him! How exclusively should they labor to glorify Him in all their faculties! What ingratitude can be so base, so black, so utterly degrading as that which lightly accounts of the “mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ!”—which, out of deference to the world’s empty scorn, or to enjoy “the pleasures of sin for a season,” spurns the offer of salvation which He procured for man, by humbling Himself and becoming “obedient unto death—even the death of the cross!” When the hosts of heaven witnessed the humiliation of their Supreme Lord, it would seem that they were overwhelmed with astonishment. “Silence, for half an hour,” reigned through all their wondering ranks. The ever-new and never-ending song of the heavenly choristers was suspended. All eyes were bent upon and all thoughts were engrossed by the wonderful phenomenon presented to their astonishment. The infinitely Holy One entering into affinity with contaminated humanity! The Supreme Ruler of the Universe taking the position of a slave! The Lord of life hastening to death! The Ever-blessed “made a curse” for man! And, Oh! what wealth is pro-

cured for man by this impoverishment of their Redeemer! Existence—repentance, saving repentance—pardon for sins that infer damnation—“the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost—peace, that passeth all understanding”—“joy, in the Holy Ghost, unspeakable and full of glory”—triumph over death—and eternal life, with God and saints, in heaven!

Of the process of this stupendous enactment—the incarnation of Divinity in the humanity—we can say almost nothing. We only know that the ordinary process of *generation* was entirely dispensed with: that the mysterious personage, who united in Himself supreme Divinity and real humanity, was conceived by a virgin, whose condition, *as such*, was not changed by her becoming a mother. We also know that this mysterious phenomenon was produced by the competent agency of Him, who formed woman from a rib taken from the side of man—that from the virgin-mother were derived the materials of humanity, employed in the incarnation, is deducible from the fact, that, through her, the Man Christ Jesus, was the descendent of David, Abraham and Adam. The immediate and miraculous exertion of Divine agency was necessary in *such* a production of perfect humanity, though, as the materials employed were already in existence, that production was not an act of creation, but an act of miraculous arrangement and combination.

Will it be said that it is unworthy the Divine character to suppose such a union, as is implied in the incarnation, between the Divinity and fallen, degraded humanity? We are not altogether adequate to the task of determining what is, or is not, becoming the Divine character. Beyond what He, Himself, has taught us on the subject, we can

know very little indeed. And He has given us very distinctly to understand that He is far from considering this a dishonorable union. Besides, we know that He represents Himself as delighting in and considering Himself honored by very familiar and close connection with every individual of the fallen race of mankind, who, profiting by the intervention of the incarnate Divinity, has secured the requisite qualification for the connection. Jesus said, to one of His disciples: "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and We will come unto him and make our abode with him." In that most touching prayer, offered up just before His passion, in which the Blessed Saviour commanded His disciples to His Heavenly Father, He says: "Neither pray I for these (His immediate followers) alone, but for them also which believe on me through their word, that they all may be one; as Thou, Father, *art* in me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me. And, the glory which Thou gavest me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and Thou in me." And, all this is said in regard to men, who have been taken "out of the horrible pit," into which the original transgression had plunged the human race! Thus, it appears that God does not consider it derogatory to His character to cultivate a close intimacy with those who have been "conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity," after they have been prepared for such intimacy, by "the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." And, as it respects the incarnation of Divinity, in "the seed of the woman," we have ample assurance that He does not regard *that* as derogatory, but, as, on the con-

trary, showing forth, in a remarkable manner, His just and unequalled claims to be glorified by all intelligent creatures, both in heaven and upon earth.

III. We are to consider *the necessity, and the purposes of the incarnation of the Divinity in humanity in the person of Jesus Christ.*

1. Man was "in bondage to the fear of death"—inthrallled, thus, by the practices of the Devil. "By sin," to which man was instigated by the temptation of the Devil, "death entered into the world," and all men were doomed to become its victims. Death, under any aspect and in any circumstances, is revolting to those who live; but, there is one circumstance which renders it *terrible* to man—this circumstance is a consciousness of sinfulness of nature and of unpardoned sin. Wherever this consciousness is felt, death is, and must be, an object of fear and terror. "The sting of death is sin." And, this sting can goad the firmest mind to agony, and can poison and embitter the most delicious cup that ever commended itself to human lips. It is projected by a mighty, a resistless force—"The strength of sin is the law"—the law of God. It is this which hurls the deadly missile, with unerring aim and with a force which nothing can parry, deep into the sinner's conscience. And, sooner or later, every sinner feels the thrust, and trembles under the terrible infliction. The sensation produced by it, call it self-reproach, a sense of guilt, remorse, or by any other name, is more agonizing to the soul of man, than "all the ills that flesh is heir to." It tortures the bosom in which its barbed fang is rankling, embitters the pleasures of this life and arrays death in indescribable terrors. It is an almost universal persuasion in the minds of men every-

where, that death is the period of a probationary state; that it will be followed by a judicial inquisition into all the conduct of accountable beings; that this searching inquisition will proceed with strict reference to the requirements of the law, given by the infinite Sovereign of the universe; and that those who shall be found delinquent in regard to those requirements, will be consigned to sufferings far greater than any of which man, in his present state, can adequately conceive. Hence, where there is a consciousness of sinfulness and unpardonable sin, these persuasions invest death with a character of terrible importance. The captive may sleep in his dungeon, and may dream of the pleasures of freedom, of green fields and smiling friends, as his; and, so may the sinner, "in bondage to the fear of death," sleep in his horrible prison-house, and he may dream of pleasure, and of hope of heaven; but the time of awaking will come to both; and, as the former awakes to find himself fettered and alone in his loathsome prison, so will the other awake to anguish and the fear of death. The whole human race were held in *this* bondage; without any possibility, by the employment of their own resources, of disinthraling themselves. They could not break the strong walls of their hideous prison-house — they could not buy off their stern prosecutor: the law was inexorable in its demands against them, crushing the iron into their very souls; and, Death, all hideous, horrible Death stood menacing them with the "judgment to come," and with the terrible punishment that was to follow upon them for their sins.

2. The opinion, that the sacrifice of a victim could expiate sin, and avert the punishment due to it, has been almost as prevalent as those we have noticed above; and,

yet, we know of no principle in moral philosophy nor any dictum of common-sense which would suggest such an opinion. Nor can we conceive how it could originate, unless it be a revelation from Him, whom sin has offended, but, who, nevertheless, is kind and loving to His sinful creatures. Such a victim, however, must have *merit*, and that merit must be *adequate to the claims of the law* which has been violated, in the sin to be expiated. Hence, though the sacrifice of beeves, and of sheep, and of goats, and of birds was enjoined by the Levitical law, we are assured, by St. Paul, that they "could not take away sin." They were of value only as types and shadows of the TRUE VICTIM, who was, "in the fullness of time," to "put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." *They* had no *real*, but important *relative* value—preparing the human mind for the stupendous exhibition of Divine love, in the sacrifice of the Cross of Calvary.

We have said, that the victim, who should expiate sin, must have merit, and merit adequate to the claims of the law, whose violation rendered the expiation necessary. This merit *no creature* could have—not, as is contended by many, because those claims were *infinite*; for, we conceive that it would be unjust, nay, utterly absurd to urge against a finite being, such as man unquestionably is, claims which only a being of infinite capacity could meet and satisfy. Every creature is, and, in the nature of things, must be under indispensable obligation to devote all his capacities and every moment of his time to the service of his Creator; and there can be no merit in complying with an obligation. Or, if merit could be predicated of the simple performance of duty, such merit would not be transferrable—another could have no claim on account

of such merit. Besides, the worth of no creature, nor of any number of creatures, could meet the claims of the Divine law upon its violation, without those creatures being irretrievably ruined by their interference; as no creatures could recover the life which must be laid down, as the condition of expiation. And, it would be flagrantly unjust to *accept* the final ruin of an innocent being, as an expiation of the sin of a guilty one.

The Divinity, though possessed of merit adequate to the demands of the law against man who had violated it, and though possessed of inherent and independent life, could not make the expiation required; for, the Divinity *could not die*. "Without the shedding of blood, there is no remission" of sin. This, we are assured, is a settled principle, in the administration of the Divine government in the moral world. Hence, the Divinity could not meet the inflexible requirements of the Divine law, in order to the expiation of man's sin. Wherefore, it was necessary, indispensably necessary, if man should be rescued from the ruin in which he had involved himself, that the Divinity, in whom alone was adequate merit and who had control of life, should take into union with Himself a nature that could suffer death—the indispensable condition of expiation. Whether He could have effected that important object, by assuming the nature of any other creature than man, capable of death, we are, perhaps, not competent, by means of metaphysical investigation and reasoning, to determine. It is enough for us to know that human nature was the nature in which the Divinity was incarnated for that purpose. We may be in error, but we think it clearly intimated, in the text, and elsewhere in the sacred Scriptures, that it was *necessary* that

man should be the victim for the expiation of the sins of mankind. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He, also, Himself, likewise, took PART OF THE SAME; that, through death, He *might*," etc. Does it not appear manifest that the apostle considered the *consanguinity* of the Redeemer and the redeemed as indispensably requisite? To *us*, it *so* appears. At any rate, the death of the victim *was* necessary; and, in order that the Divinity might accomplish the salvation of man, it was equally necessary that He should be incarnated in a nature that could die.

Our attention is now to be directed to the purposes of the incarnation. They are stated to be two—"To destroy him that had the power of death, that is the Devil—and "to deliver those, who were, all their life-time, subject to bondage to the fear of death." These purposes, and the manner in which they are accomplished, will claim our special attention; and,

1. It was the purpose of God, in the incarnation, to "destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil." Of the Devil, and his agency in the ruin of man, we have heretofore presented the opinions which we have derived from the Scriptures of truth. It is, therefore, unnecessary to occupy much time, in expatiating on his character and his malevolent relations to mankind, on the present occasion. It is enough to say, that he is a rebellious angel—probably of the highest order: that he is of vast power and resources, having under his control thousands of evil spirits: that, in intellectual capacity, various and abundant experience and indefatigable activity, he is greatly distinguished; and, that all these vast capabilities are under the impulse and direction of implacable

malignity against God, and against whatever engages His interest. Hence, towards man, created in the image of God, and to glorify and enjoy Him, the malice of the Devil is peculiarly intense. He, it was, whose wiles seduced the mother of mankind, and through her influence, her uxorious husband, to violate the law of their probation; and, in so doing, to bring upon themselves and their posterity the "curse of the law," and consequent "bondage to the fear of death." Hence, the Devil is said, in the text, to "have the power of death." He introduced it, by his machinations. He rules in the heart of the sinner; and, by the sins to which he prompts his vassal, renders him the prey of death, and, through life, the constant slave of its terrors.

By *destroying* the Devil, we are not to understand his *annihilation*, but the counter-working of his schemes, the subversion of his authority, the defeat of his enterprise. Should the sin of man be expiated, his moral nature restored to purity and devotion to God, should the fear of death be exchanged for hope in prospect of it, and triumph in collision with it, and, finally, should man be rescued from the dominion of death, and regain the immortality which he lost in his transgression, then, in the sense of our text, as we understand it, would the Devil be destroyed; and,

2. Man, who is, all his life-time, subject to bondage to the fear of death, would be delivered. And, this was the second, and, indeed, the great purpose of the incarnation of the Divinity in human nature. The salient movement, in this enterprise, was to meet the claims of the violated law against man, by an expiatory sacrifice, of sufficient merit to satisfy those claims. And, upon this first step,

every other depends for its availability. Next, ample provision was made for the renovation and purification of man's moral nature. Then followed assurances that would effectually disarm Death of his terrors, and spread over his ghastly features the smile of benignity and friendship; and, finally, not only promises, from HIm who cannot lie, but the restoration of the Saviour's humanity to life, give ample assurance that the morning will at length dawn upon the world, when the strong portals of Death's gloomy prison-house shall be thrown wide, and liberty be proclaimed to all its captive inmates. "Death *shall be* swallowed up in victory."

The manner in which these purposes were accomplished, by the incarnate Divinity, is the subject of our closing meditations, on the present occasion. It was, "through death," that our great Deliverer achieved His triumph over "him that had the power of death." It was "through death," that He "delivered them, who were, all their life-time, subject to bondage to the fear of death." His death was sacrificial and expiatory. By it, atonement was made for man. "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." "He put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." The humanity, ennobled and sustained, by its intimate and mysterious connection with the Divinity, in the person of Jesus Christ, was a victim such as could meet and satisfy the claims of the violated law against man; and, these being satisfied, a way was opened in which the Mediatorial offices of the God-Man might be effectively performed, in bringing man back to God, and in restoring to man the light of the Divine favor—thus subverting the dominion of the Devil, and delivering man from the fear of death.

Well, therefore, may the hosts of the *redeemed* occupy the days of eternity in waking the echoes of the New Jerusalem with their gratulatory anthem: “Unto Him, that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father—to Him be glory and dominion, forever and ever! Amen!”

DISCOURSE X.

PERFECT RIGHTEOUSNESS OF THE LIFE OF JESUS CHRIST.

I do always those things which please Him.—John viii, 29.

THERE is no subject more important to man than the religious and moral character of Jesus Christ, while He dwelt, *as a man*, among men; for, He is the only authoritative exemplar, whom it is the duty, as well as the interest of men to resemble. The imitation of Jesus Christ is urged upon us, in the strongest terms, both by Himself and by St. Paul—the latter of whom presuming to present *himself* for imitation, *only* so far as he resembled Jesus Christ. As the Founder of the Christian System, who exemplified, in His own character, the tendency of the doctrines which He taught and of the institutions which He established, His character is the best and most reliable exposition of the religious and moral purposes contemplated, in the establishment of that system in the world. It is true, in moral as well as in physical science, that a stream does not rise higher than its fountain. Wherefore, whatever there is, of religious or moral excellence, that is found in the character of Jesus Christ, is, we may be assured, a product of those principles and tendencies which are embodied in the system of which He was the Founder, and of which His life is a practical exemplification. A member of any association, may, through ignorance,

infirmity or the force of temptation, fall below the perfection of his rule of life; but, we cannot conceive of one, who honestly aims at conformity to the laws of his society, rising above the requirements of those laws. Hence, we reiterate the persuasion that the life of Jesus Christ is the best exposé of the character and tendency of Christianity that is anywhere to be found. As the best and most perfect representation of the genius of Christianity, and as the exemplar, whom, individually, we are required to imitate, surely the life of Jesus Christ must engage our attention. We propose, in this Discourse, to exhibit, as we are able, an outline-sketch of that life, chiefly as regards its moral and religious aspects. For, it is only in these aspects that the character of a moral being can be pleasing or displeasing to God; and, we have a persuasion, almost universal among men, that, whatever is morally or religiously right is pleasing to God. Our text is an affirmation (not a boast) of Jesus Christ, that His conduct was always *pleasing* to God, and, consequently, right, in a religious and moral view. It was uttered to repel the calumniations of His enemies, and is fully borne out, as to its truth, by the most rigid scrutiny into His whole history. We shall take up the subject and discuss it, without any formal division of it into propositions.

1. We shall first consider Jesus Christ as a *Son*—the son of His mother, and the reputed son of Joseph, His mother's husband. Of His conduct, in this relation, we have, according to our present recollection, but one statement. But that single statement covers the whole ground of filial obligation. He had been left behind by His parents, carelessly, it would seem, on their leaving Jerusalem, on occasion of some festival which they had attended there.

When they discovered that He was not in their company, nor in that of their friends, they returned; and, seeking Him in Jerusalem, they found Him in the temple, sitting among Doctors of the law, and astonishing those grave and learned men "by His understanding and answers." His mother remonstrated with Him, for the trouble His dereliction of them had occasioned to her and His supposed father. In His reply, He refers her to the higher importance of His mission into the world than any merely worldly or human interest — clearly evincing His own perfect knowledge of His high position and destination. Still, notwithstanding this reply, and the consciousness He displayed of His superior dignity and the importance of the position He had come into the world to occupy, He went down, to the country, with His parents, we are informed, "*and was subject unto them.*" This incident occurred when Jesus Christ was about twelve years of age; and as He did not enter upon His public career till He was about thirty years old, it is probable that His subjugation to His parents continued eighteen years.

Subjugation implies submission and obedience; and under both the Levitical and the Christian systems, was required to arise from reverence, or a disposition to render honor to the parents. Submission implies the postponement of the will and inclination of the party submitting, to the will and pleasure of the party to whom the submission is rendered; and obedience is acting by and in conformity to the direction of the party to whom obedience is paid. Thus was Jesus Christ subject to His mother and His reputed father. Nor could His life have commenced with more favorable auspices. Children, who are wanting in reverence for, and subjugation to, their parents afford

the most melancholy indications of worthless, disorderly and pernicious courses, through the whole of life. The habits of contempt and insubordination, towards those whom God and nature have placed in authority over them, qualify them to be refractory to order and rebellious against authority, in any society with which they may be connected, as well as to throw off the authority of God, and to withhold from Him the reverence which is His due, and which He imperatively claims at the hand of man. Whereas, reverence and subjugation to parents, in childhood and youth, induce habits of thought and action which render a man subordinate to the authorities of the societies with which he is connected in future life, and which fall in, readily, with the claims of Deity to his reverence and obedience. As our great Exemplar, therefore, it was important for us to know that Jesus Christ "honored His father and mother," not only by feeling towards them a sentiment of veneration, but by practical subjection to their authority. His example to man would have been materially defective, if this had been wanting in His *model* life. He was, thank God, a little child, a boy, a lad, a young man; and, in all these stages of early life, He left us an example of humble, cheerful, respectful obedience to His parents. Children, that would imitate the Saviour, must ever remember this, and "follow His steps."

2. He was "subject, not for wrath but for conscience-sake, to all that were in authority," whether in the Church of which He was a member, or in the Government, of which He was a subject. His individual opinion, though infallibly correct, did not prompt Him to agitation and insubordination. He faithfully exposed the errors, in doctrine and practice, which had found their way into the

Church in which He had been dedicated to God, by circumcision; but, we nowhere find Him refractory to the authority of that Church, nor laboring to form a party for its subversion. Nay, we find Him performing a miracle, that Peter might pay the temple-tribute, for himself and for his Master; notwithstanding He had made His own exemption to pay that tribute evident, in the answer which He elicited from Peter. Being the Son of God, to whom the temple was dedicated, He could not be required to pay a tribute which was designed to defray the expenses of the services performed in it. While He warns His disciples against the corrupt practices of religious teachers, He exhorts them to pay respect to their teaching. "The Scribes and Pharisees," says He, "sit in Moses's seat: all, therefore, whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do, but do not ye after their works; for they say and do not." How different is this from the too common practice among those professing to be the followers of Jesus Christ, who, on account of even slight eccentricities and imprudences, much more where there is a religious or moral delinquency, not only repudiate the faults of a minister of Religion, but his ministry and his teaching also, and claim to themselves peculiar piety and morality for so doing! As if the value of the Gospel were lessened by the defects of its propagators, or the fastidiousness of the disciple were indicative of more purity and integrity than the more liberal course of his Divine Master! We see the Saviour attending on and participating in the religious services of the synagogue and the temple, and joining in the celebration of the religious festivals, enjoined by the Levitical law; though He knew that the hour was close at hand when these shadowy rites and

imperfect services, now “waxed old,” would “vanish away,” and give place to the real, the spiritual, the life-giving and permanent institutions, of which He, Himself, would be the founder. Hence, though the law would be changed, when He should be exhibited in His character of High Priest, He came “not to destroy the law and the prophets, but to fulfill” them; and, in fulfilling them, to supersede them.

He was equally subject to the civil authority, under which He lived. That authority was a most rigorous despotism; and, as was exemplified in His own case, as well as in that of many others, often extremely unjust and oppressive; still, He exhibited, in His own life, as well as enjoined on His disciples, strict and unresisting obedience and submission to that authority. From Him, the laws of Cæsar, however unjust or oppressive, had nothing like nullification to apprehend, notwithstanding He could have made good His opposition to them, by the might of “twelve legions of angels,” or by the exertion of His own omnipotent energy. No appeal to a “Higher Law,” was pleaded by Him, as a reason for setting Himself in opposition to the law of the government, within whose jurisdiction He had placed Himself. The current of popular opinion, among the Jews, set strongly against the authority of Cæsar; and nothing would more effectually have conciliated the favor of His countrymen to Him, than for Jesus Christ to have arrayed Himself against that authority. But, when he was insidiously asked whether tribute should be paid to Cæsar, He referred them to their recognition of the supreme authority of the emperor, in receiving his coin as current money—implying that such recognition bound them to the service in question.

We are not now considering the right of a community or nation to change its form of government, or its supreme ruler, but the duties of individuals and minorities, under an established government. If *these* may properly resist or nullify the authority of laws, when they shall judge them to be improper, no matter on what grounds, there can be no government among men. What a minority, no matter how large, may properly do, each individual has equal right, if not equal power, to do also. Our great Exemplar, at all events, in circumstances which appealed as strongly as any ever did, both to personal rights and patriotic sympathies, has set us the example of unresisting submission, when the means of effectual resistance were in His hands. Government is indispensable to the well-being of man in society; and, as the submission or the subjection of individuals and minorities is necessary to the existence of government, voluntary submission is a moral duty of very great importance, and this example of Jesus Christ is of great value, as well as of binding obligation.

3. We shall next contemplate Jesus Christ, in His behavior under *temptation*: for, "He was, in all points, tempted like as we are." What temptations assailed Him, in the rest of His pilgrimage, we know not; but, there was a season of temptation, of which we have special and full information. He had, when this season of temptation commenced, been fasting "forty days and forty nights;" and, of course, was "hungry" and faint. The *first* temptation, addressed to Him, was suggested by and adapted to His enfeebled condition and craving appetite. It was thus presented, "If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread." The gist of the

temptation, we apprehend, was in the doubt implied as to His being the Son of God. Jesus Christ had recently been declared, by a voice from heaven, accompanied by the descent of the Holy Ghost, from the opening heavens, upon Him, to be the Son of God. To doubt a fact, so announced and so attested, would have been sinful. And, had Jesus Christ commanded the stones about him to be made bread, in attestation of His Sonship, He would, practically at least, have adopted the doubt. Besides, by acting upon the suggestion of Satan, He would not merely have called into action miraculous power for selfish purposes, but would have shown an impatience of inconvenience wholly unworthy the character of Him who came into the world to qualify Himself to be the "Captain of our salvation," by being made "perfect, through suffering." May we not reasonably suppose that Satan calculated upon exciting a doubt, in the mind of Jesus Christ, of His being the Son of God, and upon engaging Him in reasonings upon the subject? How plausible the inference would have been, that the Son of God could not be subject to such painful sensations of hunger, to such faintness and lassitude! How natural the conclusion, that, having power to do so, He should produce at once a supply for His hunger! Had Jesus Christ, as His disciples too often do, entered into argument with Satan, instead of promptly and decisively repelling his assaults, how cogently might the tempter have enforced his insidious recommendation, and at how much disadvantage would the tempted have engaged in the conflict!

The *second* temptation, in addition to the insinuated doubt of the Sonship of Jesus Christ, proposes a useless and wanton exposure of Himself to danger, on the part

of Jesus Christ, that He might thereby ascertain whether He were or were not entitled to the distinction of that illustrious relationship. The Divine resources, though infinite and inexhaustible, are, so far as we have any means of judging, never squandered in idle and profitless expenditure. Everywhere, throughout the works of God, such a correspondence of necessities and capabilities appears, as establishes it as a *rule* in the Divine economy to do nothing needlessly or in vain. When, by the mismanagement of the creature, extraordinary displays of the Divine power have been rendered necessary, in order to the enjoyment of existence by such creature, that rule may be, and in the case of man has been, superseded by the abounding kindness of the Creator; but, in ordinary cases, he who exposes himself to needless danger, with the persuasion that he shall be preserved from it by Divine interposition, rather insults God by his presumption, than renders himself acceptable by trust in His kindness. Hence, for Jesus Christ to have yielded to the temptation in question, would have been to question the testimony, so lately communicated from heaven, that He was the Son of God, and to have insulted the dignity and the wisdom of His Heavenly Father, by a claim for miraculous interposition in a case rendered necessary by wantonness and presumption. To render this temptation the more effective, Satan quotes from the Sacred Scriptures a promise which seemed applicable in the case, and which ought, where it is applicable, to inspire the most comfortable assurance. Standing on a pinnacle of the temple, to which he had conveyed Jesus Christ, Satan said to Him, "If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down; for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and in

their hands they shall bear thee up, lest, at any time, thou dash thy foot against a stone." Could the tempter have hurled Jesus Christ, from the dizzy elevation where He stood, the promise would have been applicable, and there would have been no presumption in His expecting its fulfilment; but to have created the necessity, by casting Himself down needlessly, or to test the truth of the announcement from heaven, that He was the Son of God, would have been offensive presumption, or insulting want of faith in the Divine veracity.

The *third* temptation was to gratification of boundless ambition, on condition that Jesus Christ should worship or pay homage to Satan. Love of power, for its own sake, is native to the human heart. The sentiment is greatly strengthened by the contingent advantages which result from the possession of such power; and, to a heart burning with philanthropy, what could promise higher gratification than the possession of universal dominion? What stupendous schemes of benevolence would universal dominion enable the philanthropist to realize! How might he mitigate suffering, dissipate ignorance, remove the heavy hand of oppression and pour a full tide of prosperity upon every class of humanity! Jarring interests might be harmonized, by judicious systems of reciprocal compensation—rival nations, seeking their respective aggrandizements at each others expense, might be reconciled, by the authority, if not by the influence of a *common* Sovereign. The wars, that deluge the earth with blood, wrap cities in flames and multiply widows and orphans in the world, might be made to cease, were the sovereignty of the world vested in a single individual. Possession of vast power, then, boundless indulgence and universal scope

for the exercise of the noblest faculties and worthiest affections of a human being, were offered in this temptation. True: the condition, on which these various advantages were offered, was wicked; and, supposing Satan to have appeared to Jesus Christ in his own proper character, it was exceedingly revolting. But is it not probable that the *seeming* of the tempter was that of an angel of light? We think it is; since, in the second temptation, he urges his proposal by an appeal to a Scripture-promise. We deem it not unlikely that he attempted to pass himself off on Jesus Christ as an angel of superior, perhaps of the highest, rank. He claims to be the delegated chief of all the kingdoms of the world; and this, certainly, favors the supposition, that he claimed high angelic rank, if, as we have supposed he did, he appeared in the guise of an angel of light.

The line of defense, against these temptations, adopted by Jesus Christ, was the same in them all—the same, in its general principle, though varied, to suit the particular character of the temptations to be resisted. He does not defend Himself against these temptations, by insisting on their want of *natural fitness*, nor by marshaling against them the prudential considerations which dissuaded from compliance with them; but, He placed Himself immediately and avowedly under the *ægis* of Divine protection, and under the direction of the Word of Divine Revelation, as His refuge in time of danger. And, this, in conflicts with an enemy so subtle and of so vast and various resources as Satan, is the only safe course. If we attempt to try conclusions with him in debate, a thousand to one that we shall be stultified and bewildered; as, in the whole art of sophistry, he is an adept of unrivaled skill.

He will have little difficulty in so mystifying the human intellect as to make appear, to it, "the worse the better reason." The only weapons he fears, in the hands of man, are the "shield of faith," and the "sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God." The former, he knows, will intercept the keenest of his "fiery darts," though hurled with the utmost energy of the arm of "an arch angel ruined;" and from the grinding edge of the latter, he has learned to shrink, even when it is wielded by the feeblest arm. The reason of this is, that faith interposes the invincible Divinity between the tempted and the assailant, and that the omnipotence of the Great Supreme is in the stroke of the celestial falchion before which he cowers, appalled and affrighted. "God is our refuge and strength—a very present help in time of trouble," embodies the rationale of the course adopted by Jesus Christ, in repelling the temptations of Satan; and His followers should ever conform themselves to His example.

In the *first* of these temptations, Satan, with well-dissembled kindness and sympathy in the discomfort of the hungry and enfeebled Immanuel, advises Him, if He has the wonderful ability to do so, which He must have if He is the Son of God, to command the stones which were at hand to "be made bread," that He might quiet the cravings of His importunate appetite, and resuscitate His enfeebled energies. He repels the temptation, by quoting, from the Scriptures, a passage which expresses trust in God in the absence of visible means of sustenance—"It is written," says He, that "man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." With such reliance upon the providence

of God, and with such entire self-abandonment to the direction of that providence, Satan at once perceived that Jesus Christ could not be successfully assailed through the medium of personal wants or discomforts; and he, accordingly, changed the point of attack: taking Jesus Christ into the City, and placing Him on a pinnacle of the temple, he said to Him, “If thou be the Son of God cast thyself down; for it is written, *He* shall give His angels charge concerning thee; and, in *their* hands they shall bear thee up, lest, at any time, thou dash thy foot against a stone,” as if he had said to Jesus Christ, ‘If thou reposest such implicit and self-abandoning confidence in Divine Providence as thou hast intimated, here is a fair opportunity for thee to evince it, and I cite thee to an apposite promise to sustain thy trust—cast thyself down—angels’ hands will be interposed to break the violence of thy fall—not even a contusion of thy foot need be apprehended.’ Jesus Christ calmly replies, “It is written again, ‘Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.’”—As if *He* had said, ‘I, indeed, may assuredly trust in Divine Providence for *needed* help; but, I may not affront Him, by trying His kindness and faithfulness needlessly—this were contrary to what is written—it were to tempt the Lord my God.’ Foiled in these two attempts, against Jesus Christ, and finding that *He* could not be induced so far to bring into question *His* being the Son of God as to appeal, in support of His claim to that relation, to miraculous power, Satan finally assails Him with a temptation, which usually finds ready enough way to the hearts of those capable of vast conceptions and endowed with magnanimity, such as he, doubtless, now considered Jesus Christ to be. Having taken Him up into an

exceedingly high mountain, and shown Him all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them, he said unto Him, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Universal dominion, with all its vast concomitant advantages, are offered to Jesus Christ, in this temptation, on the single condition that He would fall down and worship the tempter, who, as we have heretofore supposed, very probably presented himself as an angel of light, of high rank and of such consideration with the Supreme Majesty, as to have received from Him a delegated authority over the whole world. But, the temptation was indignantly though calmly repelled—Jesus Christ saying to the tempter, "Get thee hence, Satan; for, it is written, 'Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.'" Thus resisted by Jesus Christ, Satan fled from Him; and celestial messengers came and ministered to Him—doubtless, supplying Him with the food, for which He would not exert His miracle-working power, when demanded as a proof of His being the Son of God. Thus, too, if the followers of Jesus Christ will, steadfastly in the faith and with unviolated fealty to God and His word, "resist the Devil, he will flee from them;" and, they shall receive the reward of victory, in Divine communications and heavenly ministrations according to their need, be that need what or however great it may.

We shall now call attention to the *social* character of the life of Jesus Christ; and, we remark, in general, that His social life was characterized by the most perfect morality that ever adorned a human being, since man was perverted by the original transgression. This we shall particularize in a few instances.

(1.) The communications of Jesus Christ, with His contemporaries, were marked by a *truth* as decidedly opposed to guile and dissimulation as to downright falsehood. No consideration of personal advantage, no apprehension of danger, no mistaken views of courtesy or politeness could make Him swerve a hair's breadth from the straight line of truth. The leaders of the popular mind and affections were false in their teachings and vicious in their lives—He tore the veil from their errors, exposed their vices and denounced against them the woe they were bringing upon themselves. This, He knew, would excite their malice, and, through their influence, rouse against Himself the mobocratic violence of the multitude. Yet, He hesitated not for a single moment in the exhibition of truth. Doctrines, striking at the foundation of errors, long cherished by a people, are always provocations to wrath and hatred in the bosoms of a great majority of mankind. Such doctrines were taught, clearly and urgently taught, by Jesus Christ; as were also doctrines which exposed the gross corruptions of the human heart, and the vices which degrade the dignity of man—doctrines that are equally unpopular and offensive as those which uproot long-cherished prejudices. Nor was His devotion to truth less clearly shown in the reprehension of such faults as appeared in His friends and in His disciples, or in the faithful notification, to His followers, of the varied and distressing inconveniences, sufferings and dangers which they should incur by being His disciples.

(2.) In celebrating the truth of Jesus Christ, we have, unavoidably, presented another of His virtues, of a high order, to your consideration—we refer to His *courage*. Indeed, we cannot conceive of the former virtue apart

from the latter. And this courage must be genuine, a matter of principle, cool, calculating and unflinching. It is not, like the courage which enables a man to throw himself into the deadly breach, or to rush upon the death-dealing battery, dependent on external influences. It derives no support from excitement, cannot, in the hurry and bustle of action, lose the consciousness of danger nor sustain itself by the hope of glorious distinction, for either death or victory in the conflict. The courage necessary to the utterance of truth in all cases is moral courage, which looks only to conscience and to God for motive and support. Such courage eminently distinguished Jesus Christ, rendering Him calm, resolved and truthful on all occasions.

(3.) In the courage of Jesus Christ, there was no recklessness, no heedless rushing upon danger. Where duty, where the interests of truth and righteousness did not demand exposure, He carefully avoided the dangers which menaced Him, by silence or by retirement. When Herod and the Jews, prompted by the Scribes and Pharisees, sought to kill Him — when the mob of Nazareth determined to “cast Him down from the brow of the hill on which their city was built,” He quietly withdrew Himself from their reach. When His subtle adversaries conspired “to entangle Him in His talk,” by eliciting from Him something that they might employ in securing His condemnation by the rulers, or to excite the hostility of the populace against Him, He was either silent or so guarded in His replies as to defeat their nefarious purpose. He sought not — nay, He shunned danger, whenever He could do so without compromising the interests of truth and righteousness: thus evincing that His courage was

under the direction of knowledge or *prudence*—another virtue in which He excelled. In Him, we see none of that fanatical zeal, which derogated from the characters of some of the Christian martyrs, who *sought* the dangers, which they might have shunned without the sacrifice of the holy cause for which they suffered. And, what He did Himself, He instructed His disciples to do also—“When they persecute you in one city, flee ye to another”—teaching that, although He did not esteem “prudence the better part of valor,” He did consider prudence perfectly compatible with the courage and zeal by which He required His followers to be animated in His service. Jesus Christ so regulated His courage, by the sober dictates of prudence, as that there was in it nothing of rashness; and so animated His prudence, by courage, as that there was no exhibition of meanness or weakness in His character. Calmly, firmly and quietly, He moved on, in a course of righteousness, neither courting nor needlessly shunning the dangers that lay in His course.

(4.) *Patience* was another virtue greatly needed in the life of Jesus Christ, and in which He eminently excelled. His position in life was poverty, so absolute that He had not where to lay His head. His disciples understood His teaching with great difficulty—His own family regarded Him as either an imposter or a lunatic—and the popular leaders in Judea were His inveterate and unscrupulous enemies. These various circumstances rendered Him emphatically “a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Yet, under the pressure of all these discomforts, no murmur ever escapes His lips. Even the treachery of a bosom friend, or the infidelity and desertion of all those who formed His domestic and trusted circle, could

not extort one repining expression from His all-enduring patience. Neither hunger, nor fatigue, nor unfaithfulness or treachery of friends, nor malice, railing or persecution of enemies, could overwhelm or render petulant His patient spirit. With calm, self-sustained dignity, He held on in "the even tenor of His way," unperturbed, undaunted and unsubdued. Even the agonies of a painful, shameful, undeserved death could not unman the patient sufferer. Never was Jesus Christ more dignified in His demeanor, more calm, self-sustained and placable towards His enemies, than when He hung on the Cross, forsaken by His few friends and surrounded by His infuriate, mocking and taunting enemies, who had hunted Him to the ignominous doom He was now enduring.

(5.) Jesus Christ was not less distinguished for *meekness* than He was for the other virtues we have contemplated. He was as prompt to accord forgiveness for injuries, to the penitent offender, as He was slow to anger, under violent provocations. "He came unto His own, and His own received Him not;" yet did He not speedily withdraw from them the overtures of kindness which they had so ungratefully spurned. The inhabitants of Jerusalem had sought to kill Him, because He had evinced kindness for them, in announcing to them unpleasing truths, on which their highest interests depended; but, instead of promptly visiting upon them the judgments merited by their ingratitude and cruelty, He wept over them, in foresight of the terrible calamities they were bringing upon themselves by their folly and wickedness. His wail of sympathetic anguish must find an echo in every ingenuous heart, when He cries, "O, Jerusalem! Jerusalem! how oft would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen

gathereth her brood under wings, and ye would not!" "O, that thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes!" When He hung upon the Cross, every nerve thrilling with anguish, despised, reviled, railed upon and mocked by those who had unjustly procured His crucifixion, He appealed to His Heavenly Father, with strong cries; but, it was not for vengeance upon His cruel persecutors, His heartless revilers—it was for mercy upon His murderers, for pardon to His persecutors, that He prayed so fervently, "Father, forgive them,—they know not what they do!"

(6.) *Beneficence* is another of the virtues, that stand out prominently in the life of Jesus Christ. This may, indeed, be regarded as the *strain* of His character, the genius of His life. His errand to earth was one of transcendent beneficence. He so loved man, in his sinfulness and ruin, that He came into the world to save him, by sacrificing Himself for him. Kindness, like this, was never, but in this instance, heard of or even imagined by man. "God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us—scarcely for a righteous man will one die." But, it is not of this inimitable kindness of Jesus Christ that we would now speak especially, but of the kindness of His social conduct as a man among men. One of the Sacred Writers sums up the history of His kindness in one brief, but comprehensive and emphatic sentence: "He went about, doing good." *Doing good*, was His occupation; and, in pursuing this noble, godlike vocation, *He went about*, traveled extensively, seeking occasions to do good. To the demands of the curious and skeptical, that He would "show them a sign from heaven,"

in attestation of His Divine mission, He never would consent; but, He did attest that mission, by works equally miraculous, equally demanding the intervention of the Deity as any sign from heaven could have been. To these, He confidently appeals, as verifying His claims to the Messiahship. But, they were, for the most part, something more than mere miracles—they were works of beneficence as well. The energy imparted by His touch and His command, enabled “the lame man to leap as a hart”—“opened the ear of the deaf”—gave “sight to him who was born blind,” and who had groped on in hopeless darkness for thirty years—settled the agitated nerves of the paralytic—cleansed the leper from his loathsome and pestilential disease—cooled the raging of fever, and soothed the throbbing temples of the sufferer—restored, to the bereaved Jairus, his only child, which death had ruthlessly torn from his bosom, and to the amiable and pious sisters, at Bethany, their brother, whom, for four days, they had lamented, as separated from them till the morning of the resurrection. Among the most touching of these works, great alike as works of miraculous power, and as acts of especial kindness to man, was that of restoring life to the young man of Nain, as he was borne out to be buried. His mother was a widow, and he was her only son, her last prop, her only human protector, when death came and wrested him from her embrace. How desolate to her was the world, in which she was left unprotected! With what heart-rending regrets is the past regarded by her! How dark the gloom, in which her future is wrapped up! How soul-piercing the anguish of the present, to her stricken bosom! There, stark and insensible lies her late pride, and

joy, and support; and, the bier is come to bear him away to the darkness, the seclusion and the corruption of the grave! The melancholy procession commences its reluctant, slow and solemn march towards “the house appointed for all the living” to lay the widow’s son by the side of that widow’s husband! Who, that has ever contemplated such a procession, if he have any sensibility, but has felt unutterable sympathy for the chief mourner? The benevolent heart of Jesus Christ could not but be deeply touched by it. He met the sad procession, as it slowly passed out of the gate of the City; and, doubtless, entered, with all His warmth of kindly sympathy, into the grief of the stricken mother. “He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not.” “He laid His hand upon the bier;” and, they who bare it paused in their melancholy course. The attention of all was thus attracted to the sympathetic Stranger. Well had He said to the widow “weep not” for thy son; for He was about to pour in a full tide of joy upon her heart. And, now, He says to the dead: “Young man! I say unto thee arise.” His word was with power. The “broken wheel, at the cistern,” was repaired, and again set in motion, the vital current, which just now was obstructed and stagnant, resumed its life-sustaining circulation, the nervous fluid, aroused from its late torpor, imparted new vigor and activity to the muscles. The young man “that was dead, sat up, and began to speak,” and Jesus “delivered him to his mother.” What a precious gift! The gold of Ophir, and the precious stones of Golconda, would have been despised in comparison with it by the mother. None but a bereaved, widowed mother could fully estimate its value.

Another instance of the extraordinary beneficence of

Jesus Christ, deserves particular notice, as it was an instance of the performance of a miracle in behalf of others, in circumstances far less pressing than those in which He refused to perform one for His own relief. A multitude had forsaken their homes and followed Him for three days, that they might hear "the gracious words that proceeded out of His mouth;" and, so intent were they on this, their all-absorbing purpose, that they had neglected to provide themselves with the means of sustenance for the occasion. Jesus, knowing these facts, said to His disciples: "I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now been with me three days and have nothing to eat; and, if I send them away fasting, to their own houses, they will faint by the way; for divers of them came from far." Having ascertained that His disciples had, in their store, "seven loaves and a few small fishes," He directed that the multitude should be conveniently arranged for receiving the food, at the hands of the disciples. He, then, took the loaves — gave thanks — brake the bread — gave it to the disciples, for distribution among the multitude, — and divided the fishes among them also. The result was, that the multitude — four thousand in number — ate sufficiently, and left seven baskets full of fragments. A similar miracle had been previously wrought by Jesus Christ, for a like benevolent purpose; in which five thousand men, besides women and children, had been fed on "five loaves and two fishes;" leaving, after the multitude were satisfied, a remainder of "twelve baskets full of fragments."

But, apart from these extraordinary benefactions, which had a higher purpose than merely to benefit the individuals affected by them, that is, to verify His claims as the Son

of God, Jesus Christ exhibited, in the whole tenor of His daily life, a spirit of kindness, always ready to pour itself out in streams of beneficence. In His intercourse with His disciples, there is a felt influence of considerate kindness, of which the most unobservant reader, who understands the import of the narrative, cannot fail to be sensible. There is, it is true, little of the fondling endearment, which may or may not be indicative of real kindness. There are unaffected dignity and cheerful seriousness in all that intercourse. We know nothing which fills our heart with a more touching sense of deep, warm, reliable friendship than the conversation of Jesus Christ, with His disciples, recorded in the 14th, 15th and 16th Chapters of John's Gospel; and, especially, the prayer which follows that conversation, to be found in the 17th Chapter of that Gospel. His kindness to His mother, like that which He evinced towards His disciples, though unobtrusive and without much display of fondness, was manifested in a manner so striking as to render it impossible to doubt that that kindness was heart-deep and stronger than death. While He hung upon the cross, agonized and faint, He saw, standing near Him, His mother and His favorite disciple. In these circumstances of extreme personal distress, He anticipates the future sorrow and desolation which His mother, now, doubtless a widow, would soon experience, and provides, as He can, against them. This He does, by introducing John to her, *as her son*, and her to John, *as his mother*. And, in conformity to this benevolent and provident arrangement, the evangelist, who is John himself, informs us, that "from that day, that disciple took her to his own home." These, however, were special cases of kindness elicited by

peculiarly endearing relationships ; and, therefore, might have had place in the conduct of one who was not remarkable for beneficence. But, we are not restrained to these and like instances for our estimate of the character of Jesus Christ in this respect. His *occupation*, as we have already observed, was *doing good*. He had not silver and gold, to distribute among the poor and destitute. He had no wealthy home, in which to exercise the rites of a liberal hospitality. He could not, without a miracle, feed the hungry and clothe the naked. He was, Himself, emphatically poor. But, He had wisdom and kindness of heart ; and, could, therefore, instruct the ignorant, encourage the desponding, lead the wanderer back to the right way and sympathize in the sorrows of suffering humanity. These things He did. The instruction of the ignorant in what most concerns man to know, was the great business of His life. His manner was inimitably effective. Everything around Him, from the twittering sparrow to the towering eagle, from the lump of leaven to the sun, shining in his meridian strength, from the beggar, on the dunghill, to the king on his throne, was, in His hands an apt illustration of some spiritual and moral truth, that lies not within the range of ordinary thinking. "Never," said officers who had been sent to take Him into custody as a malefactor, "Never man spake like this man." In this instruction to the ignorant, we often discover the evident intention of the benevolent Teacher to have been to encourage the desponding, by exhibiting those sources of strength and of consolation which His benign religion opens to the feeble, the faint-hearted and the oppressed. We cite but one instance—"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls." Much, also, of His teaching is calculated to correct the erring and to reclaim the wanderer. The parables of the lost silver, the estrayed sheep and the fugitive, prodigal son, are intended to be illustrations of His eagerness to recover those who have forsaken Him, and the joy with which He greets their recovery. To accomplish their recovery, how solemn, how faithful the warnings, the admonitions and the threatenings which He employs! How earnest, how kindly and how soul-stirring His exhortations and entreaties! And, finally, how tenderly and how wisely does He express His sympathy with those who mourn, and direct their sinking hearts to those consolations which can override any calamity that can befall man on earth! He assures them of a peace, which the world cannot give, and which it cannot take away—of the love of His Father and of communion with Him, if they abide in His words—of the comforting influence of the Holy Spirit, whom the Father sends to be ever with His people; and, finally, of a place in the "House not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," prepared for them by their ascended Saviour.

5. There remains to be considered, in illustration of the text, one other characteristic of Jesus Christ—His *piety*. By this term we mean to express the performance of all the duties *immediately* due to His Heavenly Father. Some of these duties we shall exhibit.

(1.) The first of these, that we shall mention, is that *faith* in Him, without which "it is impossible to please Him." This faith is explained by an apostle to be a "believing that He is, and that He is the rewarder of them

that diligently seek Him." A mere assent of the mind, to the truth of a proposition, does not answer to believing, in the Scripture-sense of the term. Such assent is often without a feeling of such interest in the proposition assented to as to produce any moral effect whatever; whereas, in the faith required in the Word of God, man must believe *with the heart*—with the moral powers. We must, in the exercise of this faith, have a strong conviction of the truth contained in the proposition—it must be so embraced as to exert its proper moral influence, and it must be so relied on, or trusted in, as that we shall risk upon it any interest involved in its pledges. *Thus* must the existence of God be realized, and His relation, as a moral Sovereign, recognized, submitted to and relied upon, in order to our having that faith, which is indispensable to our pleasing God. That Jesus Christ entertained a lively and an operative conviction of the existence of God, His Heavenly Father, and of His relation of moral Sovereign, need not be proved or even illustrated by special reference—His whole life, as well as the whole of His teaching to others, attests it in the strongest manner possible. Indeed, it was the fundamental article, not in His religious creed only, but equally in His moral code. From this primary truth, He derived every duty and every incentive to the performance of duty; and, any system of morals, that proceeds on a plan different from this, will be found to be greatly defective, either in its requirements, or in its motives, or in both requirements and motives.

(2.) *Reverence* for God was strikingly manifested by Jesus Christ. As well in *deed* as in *word*, He ever evinced the most sincere and earnest desire to promote the honor of His Heavenly Father. Not only is self-

abnegation, in the presence of this duty, distinctly and emphatically avowed by Him; but everywhere and on all occasions, He exemplified it, by retiring behind the splendor of His Father's glory, and concealing, as far as practicable, His own claims in the matter. It was the Father, who sent Him into the world to save sinners. It was the Father, whose glory was to be displayed in the resurrection of Lazarus. It was the Father, who should send, in the name of Jesus Christ, another Comforter, when the Saviour should leave the world. In short, with Jesus Christ, the adoring song of the angels, in Milton,—“Him first, Him last, Him middle, without end”—was a sacred motto. He declares of Himself: “I seek not mine own glory, but the glory of Him that sent me.” And, what He so diligently sought to promote among others, we may fairly presume was a settled habit of thought and feeling with Himself.

(3.) *Love to God*, is, at once, the highest and most sacred of all the operations of a moral being, no matter what his rank or capacity. This love is a just appreciation of the Divine perfections—it is a susceptibility to be affected by those perfections—it is a desire for communion, fellowship and intercourse with Him—it is jealousy for His honor—it is a desire to be conformed to Him in all things, to be always pleasing in His sight, to witness and promote the success of all His plans and purposes. All this is directly implied in love to God. And, all this is seen in the whole tenor of the life of Jesus Christ.

(4.) *Trust in God*, is another of the duties required of moral beings; and, in this, Jesus Christ was distinguished, as in all the other duties of religion we have considered.

He trusted in His Heavenly Father for counsel, in knowledge and in duty—"I speak that which I have seen with my Father." "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God." "I can, of mine own self, do nothing — as I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me." "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." "I do always those things which please Him." "I came, not to do mine own will, but the will of Him that sent me." He trusted in Him for daily sustenance. As He taught His disciples to pray for "daily bread," and to have no anxious "care for what they should eat or what they should drink:" so, when exceedingly hungry, after a forty days' fast, He declined performing a miracle, for the supply of His wants, casting Himself upon Divine Providence, in firm reliance on what is written in the word of God—"By every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, doth man live." He trusted in His Heavenly Father in times of difficulty and danger. "I know that thou always hearest me," is the language of firm confidence; and this confidence He displayed, when repressing the ardent intervention of Peter and His other disciples, for His rescue from the hands of sinful men, into which He had been betrayed, He assured them that, were He to "pray to His Father for twelve legions of angels," they would be presently sent for His deliverance and protection. He trusted in His Heavenly Father for the glory with which, for His mediatorial achievements, He shall be crowned in the presence of an admiring universe. Thus trusting, He prays to the Father, "Glorify Thou me, with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world

was!" This is prayed, we humbly conceive, in His character of God incarnate in humanity. By the incarnation the glory of His Divine nature was veiled from the eyes probably of all creatures; and the import of the prayer seems to us to be, "In this incarnate state, manifest, to the whole universe, the glory of my Divine nature!" And, will not this prayer be granted, in its utmost import, when "seated at the right hand of God, He shall come, in His own glory and in the glory of His Father with all His holy angels," to "judge the world in righteousness?" He will, on that occasion, appear *as the Son of man*, at the same time that He comes in the ineffable glory of the Godhead. And this glory Jesus Christ expects and asks at the hands of His Heavenly Father. And, as He trusts in the Father, for His glory, as the triumphant Messiah: so, He trusts in Him for success in His mediatorial enterprise. It was the love of the Father which sent Him to redeem man. It was the Spirit of the Father, which provided Him the humanity in which He expiated the sins of the world. It was the grace of the Father, which accepted the expiation; and it is this grace which pardons the penitent, believing sinner, and supplies the influence by which the impure are washed from their iniquities, and "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

(5.) Finally, *Obedience* is due to God, as the moral Sovereign, from every moral being in the universe. Obedience is essentially different from an action performed from a regard to the beauty and natural fitness of such action, or from a supreme regard to the advantages which will result from it. The actions may be the same in both cases; but the difference of the motives prompting them,

will impart an essential dissimilarity to their moral character. The same action may be vicious, amiable or virtuous, according to the motive prompting it. An alms, given to the poor, if given to bribe popular admiration, or to secure some other selfish end, is vicious—if given to gratify personal feelings of sympathy and kindness, it is amiable; and, when given in obedience to the will of God, it is a moral virtue. The last only will find acceptance with God; as it alone acknowledges a motive that can be effective in all circumstances, and with all varieties of disposition among men. Jesus Christ frequently and emphatically declares, in effect, that His only rule of action is the will of His Heavenly Father. Nor was it merely the rule of His action, it was, also, the limit to which He cheerfully restrained His indulgence. He was not only careful to *do* the will of God, as expressed in His revealed requirements, but *resigned* to the will of God, as manifested in His providential assignments to Him. The text fully expresses the *former*; and the *latter* is strikingly exhibited, in the prayer of His agony—“Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done!” The two together, constitute that devotion to God, which all agree is His due, from those subject to His authority; and, which is the highest attainment in righteousness that can be reached by any created being. This, Jesus Christ, in His character of man, did reach; and, we, therefore, feel warranted in pronouncing *the righteousness of His life* **PERFECT.**

DISCOURSE XI.

DEATH AND BURIAL OF CHRIST.

For, I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received: how that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and, that He was buried.—1 Cor. xv, 3, 4.

THE *death* of Christ is among the most prominent subjects treated of in the Gospel; and very great importance, to the destiny of man, is ascribed to it, so emphatically and with such frequency as to secure for it the most earnest regard of every one who has any just claim to sober-mindedness and a rational concern for his own well-being. In Gospel-teaching, it is presented as the only ground on which man—a rebel against God—can expect the pardon of his offenses and a restoration to the Divine favor—his only hope of everlasting life. Such being the case, we cannot better employ ourselves, on the present occasion, than by contemplating that death, and endeavoring to trace out its connection with results so vastly important to man. We shall, in this Discourse,

I. Consider the death of Christ and His burial as historical events;

II. Endeavor to establish the positions, that the death of Christ was vicarious, in behalf of man, and expiatory of the sins of man. And,

I. We are to consider the death and burial of Christ, as historical events. In considering the death of Christ, as a historical event, we deem it proper to notice the antecedents of that death, as properly belonging to it, and necessary to be known, in order to a proper appreciation of the event itself.

1. The first of these antecedents, which we shall notice, lies far back from the event, but is, nevertheless, intimately connected with it:—it is this. A Divine Person, for the express purpose of “delivering man from the fear of death,” assumed the nature of man, that He might be able, “through death,” to effect that deliverance. That is, He took upon Him human nature, *that He might die*—death being indispensable in order to man’s deliverance from the fear of death, and, consequently, from sin, from which proceeds that fear. This assumption of human nature was voluntary, on the part of the Incarnated One, and was adopted expressly for the purpose of suffering death, in order to secure the great end contemplated in this incomparably benevolent design. It is, then, we think, sufficiently evident that the humanity of Christ was not, as some have supposed, *naturally* immortal. On the contrary, it was assumed, among other reasons for doing so, *because it was mortal*. It is true, our Saviour says, “No man taketh my life from me—I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again.” But, this argues only that, so long as He chose to live, no power on earth could deprive Him of life; and, that, when, having withdrawn that self-protection, He had yielded Himself up to the power of malicious men, and was “slain by their wicked hands,” He had power to resume the life He had permitted them to take away. If we have taken

a correct view of this matter, this antecedent is one of great importance, and well deserves to be considered in our view of the death of Christ as a historical event. Without it, we could not form a correct estimate of the character of that event.

2. The death of Christ was procured by the malice of His cotemporaries—a malice which proceeded from no ill-desert on His part. What was said of Him by His judge—"I find no fault in Him"—might have been said, with equal truth, by all those who were in the conspiracy for His death. The Chief Priests, the Scribes, and the Elders, having no facts of a criminal character to allege against Him, and anxious to give a color of justice to their murderous proceedings, industriously sought for *false* witnesses, to testify against Him; but, so entirely blameless was His life, that falsehood itself was at fault; and, no congruous testimony, to His derogation, could be invented by it. The chief causes of the malice indulged against Christ, by the Pharisees, Scribes and Priests of Judea, were the piety and probity of His life, and the purity and spirituality of His religious teaching. These were a manifest, and a severe reproof, upon their corrupt, impious and hypocritical lives, and their formal, defective and sensualizing instructions to the people, whom, blind-fold, they were blindly leading, through mazes of error, into the pit of destruction. And, it was this cutting reproof, ministered by His life and teaching, which aroused their malice against Him to the madness of rage, and determined them to compass His death. Providence, for obvious reasons, prevented their accomplishing this iniquitous purpose in the tumult of a mob, or by any means which should not come under the observation of the mul-

titude. Could they have procured His death in either of these ways, the public mind might have been led into incurable error in regard to it; but, though both these modes of putting Him out of the way were resolved upon and attempted, in neither were they successful, Providence ordering it so that what was done, in this important matter, should be open to universal observation and scrutiny. Had He perished in the turmoil of an infuriate mob—had He been stoned within the purlieus of the temple, or precipitated from the brow of the hill on which Nazareth was built; or, had He been put to death, in any manner, “in the absence of the multitude,” how ample would have been the opportunity of His unscrupulous enemies to have invented a posthumous indictment against Him, which would have held up His character to the execration and abhorrence of every lover of virtue. Or, had this been deemed either impracticable or impolitic, with what readiness could they have rendered the fact of His death questionable in the public mind! Have we not seen such an artifice successful to a great extent, in covering, from public detestation, the murderers of the ill-starred Morgan? But, as the death of Christ was procured through a judicial decision, under the pursuit of an intelligent and influential prosecution, we may be sure that the most unfavorable representation of His character, that could be sustained by any show of evidence, was exhibited against Him on His trial. And, no unprejudiced mind can avoid, through a careful examination of the report of that trial, arriving at precisely the same conclusion that was reached by His judge—“I find no fault in Him.” The predicted and afterwards averred fact of His resurrection from the dead, rendered it vastly

important that the death of Christ should have been both a notoriety and an ascertained fact—one about which there could be no dispute—no doubt. Hence, not only the importance of its being not only a public event, but an event in which the public should feel a lively interest. But as we shall have occasion, hereafter, to dwell, at some length, upon this matter, we shall pursue it no farther at this time.

3. We notice, as an antecedent of the death of Christ, deserving to be here considered, the fact that He was betrayed into the hands of the conspirators, by one of His own disciples, one on whom He had conferred especial honor, in whom He had reposed particular trust and whom He had admitted to the intimacy of familiar and daily intercourse. This act of treachery rendered it the interest of the betrayer of Christ to expose the character of his betrayed Master to public odium; and his habits of intimacy and unrestrained intercourse with that Master for years, would have enabled him to do so, had there been in that character aught that would subject Him to such odium on being made public. But, so far from attempting this, Judas, so soon as he perceived that the innocence of his Master did not protect Him from the malice of His enemies, but that sentence of death was passed against Him, took the money, for which he had sold himself to eternal infamy, to his equally infamous employers; proclaimed the innocence of his betrayed Master, and, desperate alike of respectability among men and of mercy from God, rushed upon self-destruction. The testimony of any number of faithful friends, could not, we apprehend, so strongly have established the innocence of Christ, as did this confession, extorted by remorse

from this self-convicted traitor—"I have betrayed innocent blood"—made to his prompters and coadjutors in crime. And, in the infatuation of sin, or under the constraining influence of a righteous and retributive Providence, these murderous conspirators affix, to their own infamy, the seal of perpetuity, to be "known and read of all men," by buying, with the money with which they had bribed the cupidity of Judas, to betray to them the innocent blood of his Master, the Potter's field, as a place in which to bury strangers—a spot ever afterwards designated as the "field of blood." So true is it, that God will "make the tongue of the wicked to fall upon themselves!"

4. For His betrayal into the hands of sinful men, and for the tragic catastrophe which was to follow, Christ had diligently and tenderly labored to prepare His disciples. With them He had holden a valedictory conversation; which, for dignified resignation to approaching calamity, for tender solicitude for the welfare of those whom He was about to leave, and for consoling counsel, is unequaled in the history of social intercourse. He had instituted a most significant commemorative ordinance, the observance of which was to call back to their recollection all that He had been to them, during their interesting association with Him, and which was to be perpetuated, till His reunion with them should supersede its importance; and that reunion, He promised them, should take place in circumstances of ineffable and abiding felicity. When He announced to them His approaching death, He left them a legacy, of incomparably more value than any amount of wealth, any profusion of means for mere animal indulgence, any extent of power—"Peace I leave with you,

my peace I give unto you”—“I will send you another Comforter, who shall abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth that proceedeth from the Father—He shall guide you into all truth.” This peace, and this Comforter and the consolation He brings, are not subject to the vicissitudes and hazards to which all earthly advantages are liable. Nothing can impair them, or rob a disciple of them, but his own infidelity to his interest in them. He may cast them from him, but cannot be robbed of them. Well might Christ, then, in His tender leave-taking admonish His disciples, “Let not your heart be troubled.” It was, doubtless, at least, in part, with a view to the preparation of His disciples for His death, that He led them out, in the silence and darkness of the night, to the hushed and solemn valley of Kedron, that they might join with Him in appropriate religious exercises, and might witness the mighty agony of soul with which He was to wrestle. He announced to them, as a motive to alertness of spirit on this trying occasion, that His “soul was exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death;” and bade them to “watch and pray,” that they might not enter into temptation. Then, withdrawing Himself from them, “about a stone’s cast, He fell upon His face,” and, “with strong crying and tears,” prayed earnestly, “Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me—nevertheless, not mine but Thy will be done!” Thus did Christ pray to His Heavenly Father three times; and, so great was the agony of His soul, and the arduous struggle through which He passed, that “His sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling to the ground.” Three times, in intervals of His prayer, He returned to His disciples, whom He had exhorted to watchfulness and devotion, as a safeguard

against temptation, and, alas for the weakness of human nature! as often found them asleep—"asleep for sorrow," we are told by one of the Evangelists. Their overtasked energies gave way, under the pressure of their mighty sorrows. Christ did not reproach them for their noncompliance with His exhortation to watchfulness and prayer, but, considerately and benevolently, apologized for their delinquency, by saying: "the spirit, indeed, is willing, but the flesh is weak." Immediately after His last return from prayer, Judas arrived and betrayed Him to His enemies.

5. Another antecedent of the death of Christ is a current prophecy, running through the whole of fallen humanity—foreshowing, and, in some instances, with surprising accuracy of description and minuteness of detail, the nature, circumstances and time of His sufferings and death. The *nature* of His death is clearly indicated, by a prediction of His own, when He speaks of His being "lifted up," and was frequently foretold by Him in explicit terms. Other prophets dwelt more upon the *circumstances* in which He should die—the publicity of the *event*, the malice and mockery with which He should be pursued, even in the death-agony, by His inexorable persecutors, and the patience and meekness with which He should bear the complicated anguish, with which both His body and spirit should be overwhelmed. The *time* of His death was definitely predicted by Daniel, more than five centuries before it occurred. We have merely glanced at this subject, it not being the object of this Discourse to argue the Messiahship of Jesus Christ, but merely to present an historical view of His death, with its antecedents, which have an important bearing upon its distinctive character, and its most important object.

6. The last of the antecedents of the death of Christ, which we shall notice, is the series of public proceedings which determined both the fact and the manner of His death. His arrest was by the Jewish authorities, partly civil, but chiefly ecclesiastical. His first judicial arraignment was before the High Priest and his assistants in ecclesiastical adjudication. His arraignment was, it seems to us, without any specific charge — on a mere general *presumption* of delinquency, to be sustained by any testimony that could be obtained against Him. The procuring of such testimony was earnestly attempted, but, with very little success. An abortive effort was made to find cause of criminal charge against Him in the testimony of some, who averred that they had heard Him say: "I will destroy this temple, that is made with hands, and, within three days, I will build another, made without hands." But when He declined pleading to this frivolous averment, the Court seems to have abandoned it, as insufficient for their purpose — perhaps, too, they were sensible that any farther proceedings on a charge so futile, would bring upon them the contempt of the public. Be this as it may, they seem not to have had any reliance upon it, to justify them before the world for His death, which they had absolutely premeditated. Unable to procure available testimony against Him, they resorted to inquisitorial proceedings; that they might, through His truth and the bigotry of the people, secure their nefarious object — a mode of judicial proceedings always and exclusively calculated to serve the purposes of tyranny and oppression, and quite as likely to defeat as to promote the ends of justice. How any men, calling themselves Christians, should have ever had the effrontery to adopt, as a part of their judicial economy, a

mode of trial so iniquitously employed for the unrighteous condemnation of the Author of Christianity, is a matter of great wonder. Yet, so it has been; and thousands of the innocent have, through its instrumentality, met a fate similar to that which it achieved for Him. The high priest solemnly adjuring Christ, in the name of God, to say whether He were or were not the Son of God, He replied in the affirmative. And, on this admission, they convicted Him of blasphemy — a crime punishable with death, by the law of Moses. If this admission of Christ expressed the truth, it was in no sense a crime — if it expressed a falsehood, it was certainly a grievous sin; but, it was not blasphemy, which consists in traducing the character of God, or in treating irreverently His holy name. The high priest and his coadjutors had no difficulty in the matter. They conformed their interpretation of blasphemy to the purpose they contemplated, and *assumed* that the admission of Christ, that He was the Son of God, expressed a falsehood; and, so, they found Him guilty of blasphemy, and pronounced Him to be worthy of death.

The authority to punish with death had been taken from the Jewish Courts, when Judea became a Roman province. Hence, though this high Court had found Christ guilty, and had pronounced Him to be worthy of death, they had not power to pass sentence of death upon Him. They, therefore, delivered Him over (to use a phrase, current in the Romish community, expressive of a proceeding answering accurately to this) to the secular arm. "They led Him away to Pilate," the Roman governor or procurator, to obtain, at his competent tribunal, a confirmation of their finding against Him, and the sentence

of death, which they were not permitted to utter. They were unwilling, however, that the Roman judge should *revise* their proceedings. He, naturally enough, inquired, "What accusation bring ye against this man?" They reply: "If he were not a malefactor, we would not bring him to thee." Pilate was evidently offended at their insolence, in supposing that he, instead of being judge, was to be the mere organ of their judicial decision; and bids them "take him and judge him according to their own law." They reply: "It is not lawful for us to put any man to death." Pilate, after thus extorting, from the highest officers of the Jews, this humiliating confession of their degraded condition as a people, took his place in the seat of judgment, and questioned Jesus Christ, as to the truth of a charge which, he somehow knew, was alleged against Him, and which, as it was currently understood, represented Him as hostile to the Roman Emperor. He said to Christ: "Art thou the king of the Jews?" This interrogatory led to considerable colloquy between the judge and his Prisoner; the result of which was Pilate's entire persuasion of the perfect innocence of Christ. Wherefore he said to the prosecutors of Christ: "I find in him no fault *at all*. Ye have a custom that I should release unto you one at the Passover—will ye, therefore, that I release unto you the king of the Jews?" The disinclination of Pilate to condemn Christ compelled those who sought His condemnation to plead against Him in Pilate's Court; and, besides the charge of blasphemy, upon which they had found Him guilty, they charged Him with insubordination to, if not with treason against the Emperor, and with exciting sedition "from Galilee to Jerusalem." Both these charges were utterly false and

unsupported by any show of testimony. Nay, one of these charges was directly in the teeth of the fact referred to. They charge Him with "forbidding to pay tribute to Cæsar;" whereas, He clearly inculcated, on those who consulted Him upon the subject, the obligation of paying such tribute.

"When Pilate heard of Galilee, he asked whether Christ were a Galilean? And, as soon as he knew that He belonged to Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Him to Herod, who himself also was at Jerusalem at that time." Thus was the adjudication of His case submitted to a third tribunal; and the result was, as was afterwards affirmed by Pilate, that Herod found "no fault in Him, touching those things" of which He was accused by His Jewish prosecutors. Pilate, satisfied, himself, of the innocence of Christ, and, sustained, in this view of the case, by the like opinion of Herod, announced his determination to discharge the Prisoner. But, the enemies of Christ were not to be thus baffled. Though they could not stultify the mind of the judge, they might excite his fears, and alarm his ambition. They, therefore, say to him: "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend — every one that maketh himself king, speaketh against Cæsar." This was decisive of the fate of Christ. For, on this appeal to his ambition and his fears, Pilate resumed the judgment-seat, which he had left while announcing his purpose to discharge Christ; but, it was not that he might institute a more careful and thorough examination of the case, but that he might strengthen his own position in relation to Cæsar, by making it appear that his own proceedings were determined by a sacred regard to the authority of the Emperor, and by extorting, from the refractory Jews,

an acknowledgment of Cæsar's sovereignty over them. Hence, he addressed to the elders and high officers of the Jews, this cutting taunt, intended, doubtless, to elicit the acknowledgment in question: "Behold your king!" Their reply was a vociferous repudiation of His claim to royalty, and a demand for His execution. They cried: "Away with *him*! away with *him*! crucify him!" Pilate said unto them, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar." This was enough. Both parties had gained their respective ends. Pilate had shown his deference to Cæsar, and had extorted from the Jews, noted for their sedition, an ample acknowledgment of Cæsar's sovereignty; and the persecutors of Christ had triumphed over Pilate's sense of justice, and obtained a sentence, consigning the innocent Jesus to the Cross. For, immediately, upon this acknowledgment by the chief priests, "Pilate gave sentence that it should be as they desired;" and "delivered him, therefore, unto them to be crucified." Could anything be more manifest than the malice of the prosecution, the futility of the charges against Christ, His absolute innocence, and the corruption of the judge, who, after strongly declaring the innocence of the accused, sentenced and delivered Him up to be crucified, on exclusively selfish considerations, either from base-hearted pusillanimity or from grasping ambition, or from a union of both these unworthy motives? It may be well to remark, that, notwithstanding the well-established innocence of Christ, in regard to the offenses judicially charged against Him, as well as the unexampled excellence of His character in general, there, perhaps, never was the co-operation of so many rival and incongruous parties and descriptions of men in the condemnation to death of

any human being. The Jew, glorying in the peculiarity, or, as he fondly imagined, the exclusiveness of his religious privileges—the haughty Roman, proud of the majesty and vast extent of the Empire of which he was a member—the self-applauding and superstitious Pharisee, who said to all around him: “Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou”—the sensual and rationalistic Sadducee, who allowed the existence of only such beings as could be apprehended by his faculties, and who had no hope of a future existence—the learned Doctor, who despised those who had “never been taught” the mysteries of letters and the law—the unreasoning and illiterate crowd, whose rule of action is blind impulse or immemorial custom—Judas, the disciple and apostle of Christ, and Barabbas, the blood-stained robber, Herod and Pilate, mutual in their enmity towards each other—all were concerned, with more or less directness, in bringing about the condemnation of Christ—as if all sorts of men were aware that they had an interest in His death, and imagined that, in order to profit by it, they must be parties to it! The Jews prosecuted Him: Herod relinquished his right of jurisdiction over Him, after ascertaining His innocence; and Pilate, though thoroughly satisfied of His innocence, condemned Him to the most ignominious death, that he might avoid the imputation of infidelity to the Emperor. He was delivered into the hands of executioners, familiar with human sufferings, and, therefore, capable of adding, to the bitterness of a terrible death, the mockery and insult that are harder to be borne, by a noble spirit, than the physical pains of even a death by crucifixion. Arrayed in garments indicative of royalty, crowned with thorns, bearing a sceptral reed in His hand, Christ was subjected

to the mockeries and reviling of the soldiers who had His crucifixion in charge, and of the thronging multitude, led on by their rulers and priests. They bowed the knee before Him, in mock homage, crying to Him, in taunting irony: "Hail, King of the Jews!" They spit in His face, and smote Him on the head with a reed. Wearyed, at length, with their outrages upon Him, they loaded Him with the Cross, which was to be the instrument of His death, and led Him out of the city, to the place of His execution. Here we close our imperfect notice of the antecedents of the death of Christ; and shall now proceed to consider that melancholy event itself, as an historical fact. And,

1. The death of Christ was *judicial*. In being so, it was of course, a matter of record. It was not left to the loose and uncertain commemoration of tradition, nor to the thousand mutilations, perversions and exaggerations of rumor. Whatever motive might afterwards induce either friends or foes to garble the history or misrepresent the character of the death of Christ, the truth, with regard to them, could be ascertained, by an examination of the official records in the case. This, considering the importance which has ever been ascribed to that event, is a circumstance of no inconsiderable value. If His enemies desire to overwhelm His memory with opprobium, by representing Him as having been condemned for crimes, meriting by their enormity His ignominious doom, or by ascribing to Him weakness, remorse, ruffian hardihood or desperation, in His death-agony, they will be restrained or may be corrected by the judicial record. Or, if His friends, under the promptings of an erring desire to promote His honor, as has too often been the case, should

ascribe factitious incidents to His trial or death, the record will hold them in check, or rectify the false representations, which their mistaken zeal or pseudo piety has prompted them to pass upon a credulous world.

2. His death was *public*, and was rendered a matter of great *notoriety* by many circumstances, which stood related to it. It occurred during the Passover, a principal festival of the Jews, at which all, who could do so, were required and were disposed to be present:—His previous teaching and miracles had excited great interest throughout the whole country of Judea and Galilee:—the facts, that He had been arraigned before the High Priest and his council, before Herod and Pontius Pilate, and had been condemned and sentenced to the Cross, on charges of blasphemy and sedition against the imperial authority, were calculated to attract the attention of the vast crowds, who were assembled for the Passover, to the spectacle of His crucifixion. Accordingly, the Evangelist, with characteristic simplicity, states that “many came together to that sight.” This was important, not only that there might be many witnesses of His deportment in the hour “which tries men’s souls;” but, especially, that there might be no possibility of successfully denying the fact of His death—a fact which His enemies would have strong temptation to discredit, when His resurrection should be proclaimed to the world. And, they probably would have questioned the fact of His death, if there had not been many who witnessed it, and who had ocular evidence of its absolute certainty.

3. His death was by a process, to which only slaves could lawfully be subjected. It is true, that the Romans considered all whom they conquered in war liable to this

punishment; but, then, they considered all such as slaves. It was, therefore, an ignominious mode of execution. It was not less barbarous than it was humiliating. The sufferer was extended upon the Cross—His hands and feet were fastened to it, either by cords or nails, and made to bear the entire weight of the body. The cross was then erected; and the sufferer was left to linger out his last hours in excruciating pain, till famine or intense anguish should bring him relief in death. This, sometimes, did not occur for days—generally, it would seem, for more than three hours; for, when, at the end of three hours, it was proposed to Pilate that the bodies of Christ and the two others that were crucified with him, should be removed from the crosses on which they had suffered, “he marveled if they were already dead; and commanded that their legs should be broken,” doubtless, as a security against their escape, should they not be dead. The order was executed upon the other two—probably there were indications of life in them. But, “when they came to Jesus, and saw that He was dead already, they brake not His legs.” But, to “make assurance doubly sure,” as to the reality of His death; “one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water.” The heart is surrounded by a considerable quantity of water—probably designed to prevent that active and all-important muscle from becoming rigid. This water is enclosed in a sac, called the pericardium. The only sources, whence the double efflux, which followed the spear of the soldier, could have been drawn, were the pericardium and the heart; both of which must have been penetrated by that spear. Here, then, besides the ordinary evidences that life was extinct in Christ—evidences which

prevented the soldiers from breaking His legs, and, doubtless, satisfied the surrounding multitude of His death, was a phenomenon which rendered any doubt of the fact utterly impossible.

The *burial* of Christ is among those things which St. Paul, having received by revelation from God, declared to the Corinthians; and, for this reason, but especially because of its very important connection with the question of His resurrection, it ought not to be passed over in silence by us, on the present occasion. It was, moreover, deemed of sufficient importance to be the subject of a very explicit prediction by the Prophet Isaiah, "He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death." Christ was crucified on the day preceding the Sabbath of the Passover-solemnity, which Sabbath was, in the estimation of the Jews, "a high day"—a day of peculiar dignity, if not of peculiar sanctity also. The Jews, sufficiently regardful of ceremonial observances, however delinquent they might be in reference to spiritual religion and moral duty, were unwilling that the bodies of the crucified should remain on their crosses during that holy season; and they, accordingly, besought Pilate that they might be removed before its commencement. On this request being granted, Joseph, of Arimathea, a rich man and a Counselor, or member of the Sanhedrim, begged the body of Christ from Pilate; and, with the assistance of Nicodemus, another member of the Sanhedrim, decently interred it in Joseph's own sepulchre, a new one, hewn in a rock, and which had never been occupied. To the entrance, of this strong habitation of death, "a great stone was rolled;" and thus was completed the burial of Christ.

How deep the gloom that now settled down upon the

prospects of infant Christianity ! How sad and hopeless the condition of the disciples, who had followed Christ in His brief but brilliant career, of somewhat more than three years, into which He had crowded so much valuable instruction and so many and so mighty works of beneficence to man ! They "had trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel." And, this they understood of deliverance from temporal bondage—from the dominion of their conquerors, and of a triumphant return of those who had been carried into captivity, to their own country—their re-establishment in their former possessions, and a return of their ancient prosperity. By the death of Christ, this trust was rendered nugatory. They had expected, as is evident from much of their history, by fidelity and devotion to their wonderful Master, to win for themselves places of power and distinction, in "the kingdom of His father David," which they supposed He would restore, and of which He would be the King. How blasted their ambitious hopes, when they saw their Master expire in ignominy on the Cross, and shut up in the tomb ! It was a season of triumph to His enemies ; of disaster, defeat and despair to His friends. Little did the former—little did even the latter suspect that His death was the achievement which was to place Him on the throne of universal dominion—to "open the prison doors," not of captive Jews and enslaved Israelites alone, but of the enthralled human race, held in bondage to a captivity, incomparably more galling and degrading than that of Assyria, of Babylon or of Rome. Little did His disciples, in this hour of dismay and disappointment, imagine that the Cross of their Master was to be the means of their elevation to a dignity and an honor, before

which the glory, not only of earthly ministers of State, but that of kings and emperors, would pale into insignificance. Yet, thus it was to be ! And, thus had Christ diligently endeavored to instruct His disciples it would and must be. He had reiterated to them, in clear, strong language, the, to them, most unwelcome truths, that He must be betrayed into the hands of men—must suffer and die, to accomplish the purpose for which He came into the world—that they, His disciples, instead of the earthly greatness of which they fondly dreamed, “should be hated of all men for His name’s sake:” that their “names should be cast out as evil:” that “every one who should kill them, would think that he did God service:” that “in the world, they should have tribulation.” But they were “dull of hearing,” to these important teachings, and they clung, with inveterate pertinacity, to the prevalent opinion of the Jews concerning the Messiah. That their Master was that long-promised Personage, the disciples did not and could not entertain a doubt; but, fully imbued with the Jewish error, concerning the Messiah, which represented Him as a victorious *temporal* prince, achieving the independence and supremacy of Israel, they could not apprehend the meaning of His instructions on the subject. And, not till the death of their Master, could they be made to understand His teaching, plain as it was, and frequently as He endeavored to impress it upon their minds. But, now that Christ was ignominiously dead, they must either renounce their belief in Him, as the Messiah, or they must correct their opinions of what the Messiah was to be. The *former*, they could not do. He had afforded them so many and so convincing evidences that He was the promised Mes-

siah, that, without doing utter violence to the plainest dictates of sober reason and unsophisticated common-sense, they could not divest themselves of the conviction that He was the Messiah. Hence, they must correct their opinions concerning that Personage. And, now, with what new significance do the earnest and reiterated teachings of their Master appear to them ! There wanted but one other event, in the fate of their Master, to enable them to understand these teachings, and soon was that event to occur. And, then the dismayed, disheartened and cowering disciples should stand forth, before a world of enemies, boldly to proclaim their Master the Messiah, and clearly to exhibit the true character and vast importance of His death. Had the death of Christ been, as rationalistic divinity would fain make us believe, no more than the death of a great and good man, attesting His belief of the doctrines He had taught, and presenting an example of patience, meekness and magnanimity, in great sufferings and in an unjust and cruel death, it would merit no higher consideration than the death of Isaiah or Peter, or of thousands of others, whom the malice of wicked men has subjected to torture and to death, "for righteousness sake." Nor, on this supposition, can the rapid transition of the disciples of Christ, from abject cowardice, to a courage which nothing could daunt—from the deepest gloom and despondency, to exultant joy and triumphant confidence, be rationally accounted for. But, when the true character and purpose of the death of Christ are known, its importance is seen to be transcendent; and the change in the disciples, supposing them to have come to a knowledge of these after His death, is perfectly reasonable. To the *peculiar* nature and purpose of the death

of Christ, we shall now invite attention. It was *vicarious on behalf of man*; and it was *expiatory of man's sin*.

The *vicarious* character of the death of Christ, is clearly indicated in the reason assigned for the incarnation of Divinity in the humanity, in His person—"Forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same, that, through death, He might destroy him that had the power of death, this is the Devil; and deliver them who, through fear of death, were all their lifetime subject to bondage." He was incarnated, *that He might die*; and His death was to be for the deliverance of the children of the original transgressors, as well as for that of the transgressors themselves. The authorities, for the *vicarious character* of the death of Christ, are too numerous to be stated in this Discourse. We shall adduce only a small portion of them. *Isaiah* liii, 4-8: "Surely He hath borne our grief and carried our sorrows: yet, we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But, He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought, as a lamb, to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare His generation? for He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken." *Daniel* ix, 26: "And, after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah

be cut off, but not for Himself." *Romans* iv, 24, 25: "—believe on Him, who raised up Jesus, our Lord, from the dead; Who was delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification." *Romans* v, 8: "God commendeth His love to us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." *1 Corinthians* xv, 3: "I delivered unto you, first of all, that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." *Galatians* iii, 13: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, 'Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree.'" *1 Thessalonians* v, 9, 10: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us; that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with Him." *Hebrcws* vii, 26, 27: "Such a High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners and made higher than the heavens, who needeth not daily as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the people's; for, this He did once, when He offered up Himself." *Hebrcws* ix, 26, 28: (Christ) "hath appeared to put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself—was once offered to bear the sins of many." *1 Peter* ii, 21, 24: "Christ also suffered for us—bare our sins in His own body on the tree." *1 Peter* iv, 1: "Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh." We produce but one more authority on this point—*Revelation* i, 5, 6: "Unto Him that loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to Him be glory and dominion, forever and ever. Amen!" There is the less necessity to multiply authorities in support of this point, as it is, we believe, in some sort, conceded by all who receive the

sacred Scriptures as the rule of their faith. Even those whose rationalistic tendencies have induced them to place the lowest estimate upon the claims of Christ, allow Him the honor of having both lived and died for the benefit of others rather than of Himself. This, though, in some sort, expressing what is vicarious, does not express our views of the sense in which His life and death were *for*, on behalf of mankind ; yet, it saves the advocates of such low views, of Christ's intervention in behalf of man, from the charge of *direct* opposition to the word of truth. In our view of Scripture-teachings, the death of Christ is represented as vicarious in the sense of *substitution*—that He died in the stead of man : so, that, so far as the original transgression was concerned, man is, by the death of Christ, redeemed from the guilt and death incurred by it; and with regard to the actual sins of the original transgressors after the Fall, and of their descendants, the offenders are redeemed from the death due to those sins, so soon as they secure a *personal* interest in the substitution, by laying the hands of faith upon the vicarious victim, and confessing over Him, with proper penitence, the sins which they have committed. In other words, we consider the death of Christ *expiatory of the sins of mankind*—*absolutely* so of the original transgression—*provisionally*, of all other sins, properly brought within the scope of its influence ; and this, we shall now endeavor to show, is the scriptural doctrine on the subject.

1. The sacrifices *required*, under the Patriarchal and Levitical dispensations, are represented by St. Paul as of no intrinsic efficacy, in effecting an amicable relation between God and offending mankind—as deriving their whole value from their representative character. And,

who can doubt the correctness of this representation? Who can fail to see that "it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin?" And, yet, great stress is, in the Mosaic law, laid on the requirement that sacrifices of *these* should be offered for the taking away of sin! Whence this importance? We answer, from the fact that they were intended to "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things." From the fact that these sacrifices pre-represented the one great, effective Sacrifice, in which Christ did "put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself." It will not, we think, be denied that, among the sacrifices which were to "serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things"—things conformed to the mind and purpose of God—those which were *expiatory* were prominent, and absolutely required of all. In what had these examples their exemplification—these shadows their substance; if the death of Christ for man were not *expiatory*? There is nothing else in His relation to man, or in the purpose of His death, that at all answers to these examples and shadows. This fact alone ought to be considered conclusive evidence that, by His death, Christ expiated the sins of those for whom He offered Himself a sacrifice. And, we apprehend, it will be extremely difficult, on any other supposition, to make out any pertinency in these examples and shadows, to anything in the life or death of Christ; or, indeed, any wise reason of their being emphatically enjoined on the Israelites, in their *initial* and preparatory religious system.

2. But, these *reasonings* apart, if there be any reliable signification in the language of the Sacred Scriptures, the chief intention of the death of Christ was the expiation of the sins of mankind. We shall briefly notice a few of the

many passages of Holy Writ which clearly and expressly teach this important doctrine.

(1.) The *fifty-third* chapter of the prophecy of *Isaiah*, is, we believe, universally considered, by those who accredit the New Testament, as a Divine Revelation, as being a prophetic representation of Christ, as to His character, His reception among men, His death and its purpose. In that chapter, from the fourth to the twelfth verse, both inclusive, we have the following eloquent and soul-stirring account of His death and the purposes to be accomplished by it: "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God and afflicted. But, He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray: we have turned every one to His own way; and the LORD hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and He was afflicted; yet, He opened not His mouth: He is brought, as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment; and, who shall declare His generation? for, He was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was He stricken. And He made His grave with the wicked and with the rich in His death; because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong His days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in His hand. He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied:

by His knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide Him a portion with the great, and He shall divide the spoil with the strong; because He hath poured out His soul unto death; and He was numbered with the transgressors; and He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." We should deem an elaborate exposition of this passage, with a view to prove that the death of Christ was expiatory, an affront upon even an ordinary understanding. This doctrine is so clearly expressed, and in such a variety of forms of speech, as must commend it to the conviction of every candid man, whose mind is not preoccupied with some opinion, to which it cannot be reconciled.

(2.) We next invite attention to *Matthew* xx, 28: "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." *1 Timothy* ii, 5, 6: "The man, Christ Jesus, Who gave Himself a ransom for all." *Acts* xx, 28: "Feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." *Titus* ii, 13, 14: "Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, Who gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity;" and *Revelation* v, 9: "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood." In these passages, we are said to be *ransomed*, *purchased*, *redeemed* by Christ's *giving His life*, *giving Himself*, *with His blood*, *with His own blood*. We understand the various terms employed, in regard to the objects accomplished, to be identical in signification; and so we understand the terms and phrases used to express the means by which it was accomplished. That is, we understand that the same thing is meant by *ransom*, *purchase* and *redemption*; and that

giving His life and *giving Himself* are equivalent in meaning to the *shedding of His blood*. Man had sold Himself into bondage “under the curse of the law”—had been taken captive, through his iniquity. Christ gave Himself, gave His life, poured out His blood to purchase, ransom, redeem him from his bondage. If such be not the meaning of these portions of Scripture, their language is only calculated to mislead their reader.

(3.) *Romans* iv, 24, 25: “Jesus, our Lord, Who was delivered for our offenses.” *Romans* v, 6–11: “For when we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly. God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son. We—joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” *Romans* viii, 32: “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him, also freely give us all things?” *Hebrews* ix, 28: “Christ was once offered, to bear the sins of many.” *1 Peter* ii, 24: “His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree.” We understand the phrases *delivered* and *delivered up*, in these texts, to mean being surrendered up to be put to death. Our Saviour Himself uses this form of speech to express His own consignment to the hands of His murderers—see *Luke* ix, 44, and xviii, 32. *Offered* is a term so often and so almost exclusively used in regard to presenting sacrifices to God, that, taken in connection with the purpose for which Christ was offered, *i. e.* “to bear the sins of many,” we cannot hesitate to believe that the text quoted above, in which this term is employed, is to be understood as representing Christ as a sacrifice,

bearing—suffering for—the sins of many. That His being delivered, offered, dying for mankind, bearing their sins in His own body on the tree, reconciling us to God by His death, conferring on us the atonement, clearly express the expiatory character of His death, seems to us altogether incontestable, with any decent regard to the meaning of Scripture-language.

(4.) We make one more quotation, which, to our apprehension, abundantly proves that the death of Christ was both *vicarious* and *expiatory*. 1 Peter iii, 18: "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust; that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." What is meant by the once suffering of Christ, is obvious, from the explanatory clause inserted by the apostle—"being put to death in the flesh." The occasion of His suffering death is stated—it was for, or on account of sin, that He suffered; so, also, is the purpose of His suffering stated—"to bring us to God." Man was so utterly separated from God by sin, as that, by no means, within the scope of his own capabilities, could he, by any possibility, return to Him. Christ suffered for his sin: that He might open to man "a new and living way, through the veil, that is to say His flesh," by which he might return to the Divine favor.

3. The expiatory character of the death of Christ, may, we think, be conclusively inferred from the *peculiar agony* of that death. We do not mean by this, the agony of His death as it was by crucifixion. This horrible death, thousands have endured, without any of them, as we suppose, suffering the agony which He suffered, both in prospect of it and under its infliction. And,

every indication goes to support the supposition that His agony was of the spirit, rather than of the flesh. And whence was this agony of spirit? Was He not absolutely pure, and upright in His life? No pang of remorse throbbed in His pure and guileless heart. Did He lack courage, fortitude or magnanimity? Were not they all strikingly exemplified, in His life of sorrow, in the ingratitude He encountered from His beneficiaries, in the unfaithfulness of His friends, in the malice, contradictions and persecutions of His enemies? Where can we find an instance of weakness, impatience or repining in His whole life of poverty, toil and social annoyance? Yet, hear Him, in the vale of Kedron, when contemplating the near approach of death, declare to His disciples: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death!" See Him prostrate upon the ground, in an agony of supplication, that "if it were possible, the cup might pass from Him—that He should be saved from the hour" that was upon Him. Mark the mingled sweat and blood, which agony of soul had wrung from His sympathetic body! Hear Him on the Cross, in tones of bitterest anguish, remonstrating with His Heavenly Father: "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken me?" Is this the brave-hearted, the firm-minded, the patient and the virtuous Jesus, who walked, with head unbowed and spirits unperturbed, alike through the midst of infuriate mobs and upon the waves of the troubled sea? Where now are His courage, His patience, His fortitude, His magnanimity, if thus He quails under the prospect or under the actual suffering of death, though that death is by the Cross? But, no! It is not the simple pain of death, either in prospect or in endurance, that agonizes His soul thus fearfully—it is

the weight of a world's sins — the terrible exactions of an inexorable law, whose penalty He intercepts from man, by exposing His own soul to its infliction. O, Sin! how horrible must be thy nature, how deadly thine influence; since the guilt thou hast fastened upon man, could be expiated only by such agony on the part of God's only-begotten, well-beloved Son!

The Divinity took part of humanity, that, through death, He might rescue man from the fearful consequences of his sin. This He did, because, in the economy of the Divine government, as we are assured by Revelation, "without the shedding of blood is no remission" of sin. Why the shedding of blood or the offering of sacrifice, for this purpose, is necessary or availng, we know not. But, we do know that the fact is clearly revealed. This ought to satisfy us, since the offended Sovereign has an unquestionable right to prescribe His own terms of reconciliation to His revolted and rebellious subjects. The necessary sacrifice, for the redemption of man, could have been offered by no creature; because no creature has aught to offer that does not already belong to God, and because creatures, not having independent life, would have been finally lost, had they made the sacrifice required, which was death. To meet this exigency, the Divinity appeared "in the likeness of sinful flesh." The humanity could die, the Divinity, in union mysterious with that humanity, could impart to its death the required merit — could sustain it in the agony of an expiatory death, and could restore it to life, and exalt it to glory, as the reward of its vicarious sufferings. The Divinity could not suffer, could not die; but the humanity could suffer; and the Divinity could impart efficacy, for man's redemption, to

that suffering. The humanity could die; and the Divinity could restore it to life. "Great," then "is the mystery of godliness! God was manifest in the flesh;" and, in His incarnate state accomplished, through the expiatory death of His humanity, the redemption of man. And, great as the *mystery* of this stupendous transaction, its *mercy* was equal in greatness to its *mystery*. Hence, every human heart should swell with gratitude to God for His incomparable mercy; and, this gratitude should manifest itself by utter hatred to sin, which cost the Redeemer so much, and by life-long devotion to His service, and to the advancement of that cause in which He has shown Himself so deeply interested—the reformation, the salvation and the happiness of the human race. Especially, should a consideration of the mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, induce in every individual, sincere penitence for sins, humble confidence in the kindness and faithfulness of Him, who, while we were yet sinners, and enemies by wicked works, had such compassion on us as to expiate our sins by His own death, and ardent, devoted and self-sacrificing love to Him, who "first loved us, and gave Himself for us," that He might bring us back to God, restore us to the Divine favor, and secure to us "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away—eternal in the heavens." It should prompt us to earnest, persevering endeavors to "glorify Him in our bodies and spirits which are His"—purchased with His own blood, in the unutterable agonies of the Cross. It *will* give a new, a deeper, a sweeter tone to the harmony of heaven, as the blood-washed multitudes fill the domes of their holy habitation with the grateful song of REDEMPTION.

DISCOURSE XII.

RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

The Lord is risen indeed.—Luke xxiv, 34.

THE death and burial of our Lord Jesus Christ were the subjects of our last Discourse. At its close, we left Him lying in the tomb, the close prisoner of Death, from whose sure custody no human being had ever yet effected his own escape, or been so delivered, by any other agency, as not to be liable to return under his power. Doubtless, His enemies, both human and infernal, exulted in the triumph they had achieved over one who had occasioned them so much annoyance, and whose power and resources had been so mysterious and so formidable to them. They now imagined that His resources were exhausted and that His power was overcome ; and, we may readily conceive that such joy, as wicked men and Devils can feel, was at its utmost height ; when, hovering around His cross, they saw Him expire in ignominy and agony, and when they beheld Him incarcerated, cold, stark and nerveless, in His rock-strong sepulchre. May we not well suppose that the Devils, who had cowered and fled from their chosen haunts, at His presence and His bidding, and that their proud and powerful Chief, who had been signally

foiled in an encounter with this mysterious Personage, would celebrate His downfall, with a triumph as hearty and as boisterous as that which the Philistines exhibited on the occasion of the captivity of their terrible enemy, Samson ? May we not justly imagine that their shout of exultation swelled through all the vast caverns of their hideous habitation ? Nor less triumphant were the congratulations, with which the envious Priests, the bigoted Pharisees and the sensual, skeptical Sadducees greeted one another, around the cross and the sepulchre of Him, whose simplicity, truth and purity had excited in their bosoms such implacable hostility.

Meantime, His few friends were cast down and overwhelmed. Their incomparable Teacher, their tender and sympathetic Friend, whom they loved with ardor, respected with admiration and trusted with confidence, was ruthlessly torn from them, by treacherous, cruel and murderous hands. Their hopes, for humanity, for their country and for themselves, which had confidently anchored upon His wisdom, His goodness and His power, were rudely driven from their holdings ; and they saw themselves cast upon the turbulent sea of an unfriendly world at the mercy of its angry waves, and without the guidance of a Pilot or the assurance of a secure anchorage or harbor. Notwithstanding the plain and oft-repeated assurances of their Master, that He should suffer a death of violence, and, afterwards, rise from the dead, His death was to them an astounding surprise ; and "they knew not the Scripture, that He must rise again from the dead." Their Jewish prejudices, concerning the Messiah, whom they firmly believed their Master to be, had taken such fast hold upon them, that their minds were stultified ; so, that,

although they reposed entire confidence in the truth of their Master's teaching they could not and did not understand His teaching, in regard to His death and resurrection. When the former event occurred, they were, consequently, overwhelmed, confounded and disheartened ; and did not expect that the latter event, always, in their Master's teaching, connected with the former, would also occur. This is evident, from the whole history of the state of mind which prevailed among the disciples, in the interval between the death and resurrection of Christ, and from their "slowness of heart to believe," even when the evidences of His resurrection were accumulated upon them in such force as to *demand* credence, and to imply stupidity or perversion in the mind which did not accord to it the credence demanded. This circumstance, however derogatory to the ingenuousness of the disciples, is no slight presumption, in favor of the testimony they afterwards bore, with so much consistency and pertinacity, in the most discouraging circumstances, to the resurrection of Christ ; as that event was in contradiction to all their previous calculations.

Both the enemies and friends of Christ, then, considered His death as the complete and final overthrow of Christianity—the utter defeat of an enterprise, in which His early prospects of success were so alarming to the former and so cheering to the latter. Neither enemy nor friend was aware that the death of Christ was an event upon which His triumph over all His foes, and upon which the glorious success of His enterprise was absolutely dependent. *That* death expiated the guilt of man's transgression, poured a new tide of moral life, upon a world "dead in trespasses and sins," and opened "a new and living way,"

by which the banished from the presence and favor of God might return.

But, though the disciples of Christ, believing, as they did, that He was the Messiah, and unable to reconcile His death with their Jewish prejudices concerning that illustrious Personage, did not understand His frequent predictions, *that He should die, and that He should rise from the dead*, His enemies, who did not believe Him to be the Messiah, understood them perfectly. Hence, after His burial, they went to Pilate and said to him, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while He was yet alive, 'after three days, I will rise again.' Command, therefore, that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest His disciples come by night, and steal Him away, and say to the people, 'he is risen from the dead :' so that the last error shall be worse than the first. Pilate said unto them, 'ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can.' So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."—*Matthew xxvii, 63–66.* This precaution, had Christ been the impostor His enemies represented Him to be, would have been altogether proper; especially as it was wholly improbable that they should have supposed it possible that the disciples could have misapprehended their Master's teaching, in regard to His resurrection. Still, judicious as this precaution must be admitted to have been, it was, owing to the misapprehension of the disciples on the subject, their utter despondency and more than feminine timidity, wholly unnecessary. They who had been scattered like sheep, when their Master was apprehended, can hardly be supposed to have been capable of so bold an act as that of taking away the body of their murdered Master, though

no official seal had rendered His tomb inviolable, and though no armed guard defended that body from abduction. The precaution taken, was, however, of vast importance—it rendered nugatory and even absurd any attempt to account for the absence of Christ's body from the sealed and guarded sepulchre, that did not proceed on the supposition of super-human agency—especially, as the baffled guards were alive, to testify to the facts in the case.

On the morning of the third day, the sepulchre of Christ presented subjects of curious and deeply-interesting investigation, to all who had been concerned at His death, whether as friends or as foes. The official seal had been broken—the great stone, which had closed the entrance into the tomb, had been rolled away—and the body of Christ was gone. These were facts, about which there was and could be no mistake, no doubt. How did all this happen? would be the natural inquiry of every one, in any way interested in the matter. Among those, thus interested, the “Chief Priests and Pharisees,” who negotiated with Pilate the making of the sepulchre sure, would, of course, be prominently active. And, they were so; for, they were the first to publish *an account* of this mysterious affair. That account was simple enough—it was, that, *while the guards at the sepulchre slept, during the night before the third day, the disciples of Christ came and stole away the body.* This is given as the testimony of the guards themselves. Is there any probability in this account? Is it probable that a military corps would sleep on their post, when they knew that there was so strong solicitude, on the part of the influential murderers of Christ, that they should, by their vigilance, render impossible the abstraction of the body by the disciples? Was

it at all likely that the disciples should attempt such an enterprise, knowing, as they must, that there was a guard stationed around the sepulchre to prevent its success? Supposing it possible for them to have desired to have in their possession the lifeless body of their Master, can we conceive of their having courage to attempt the obtaining of it in the circumstances in which they and that body were placed? And, why should they desire possession of their Master's body? Even the body of Sarah, when deprived of life, became irksome to her long and devotedly-attached husband; so that he was anxious to "bury it out of his sight." It certainly was not that they might give the body of their Master decent and honorable burial, that the disciples should have desired to have it in their possession; for, already had Joseph and Nicodemus given it sepulture, in a style far superior to any which their means would enable them to afford to it. And, as His resurrection from the dead was not a part of the creed they had adopted in regard to Him, they had and could have no temptation to steal the body, with a view to the propagation of a falsehood on that point. We can see no reason whatever why the disciples should have desired to get the body of their Master in their possession, even had there been no difficulty or danger in the attempt to obtain it. But, what is the testimony on which the disciples are charged with stealing the body of their Master? It is the testimony of men, who, by their own account, were asleep when the act which they attest was being performed! Supposing their testimony believed, by their employers, would those guards have escaped severe animadversion? To sleep on his post, was, in a soldier, a capital offense, punishable with death. Is it probable that the "Chief

Priests and Pharisees," who had so anxiously sought to prevent the body of Christ from being stolen by His disciples, would have been indulgent toward these soldiers, whose acknowledged delinquency had defeated their so much cherished purpose ? Yet, we hear of no stir made by them to bring those culpable soldiers to condign punishment ! Whence this incongruous lenity, in men who had hunted the innocent Jesus to death ? The fact is that the soldiers had told them *the truth*, and that they were unwilling that the truth should be told to any others: so, they invented this account, and bribed the soldiers, with money and promises of protection, to give it currency among the people. And, surely, there never was a clumsier invention, a tissue of grosser absurdity palmed upon the world !

There is another account of these mysterious phenomena. It is, briefly, that *Christ arose from the dead on the morning of the third day after His crucifixion*. Only these two modes of accounting for the events at the sepulchre of Christ, were resorted to at the time. One of these, we have just considered—the other now solicits our attention. If the resurrection of Christ were affirmed to have been brought about by the operation of any law of nature, every one would and must unhesitatingly pronounce that it never so occurred. But, such is not the representation. The resurrection of Christ is assigned to an agency, which all but atheists must at once allow to be fully competent to the production of such an event—the power of Deity. The only rational questions on the subject, then, are, *would* that power be exerted to produce *such* an event? and, *was it actually exerted?* These questions must look exclusively to Revelation for their answer; as they do

not fall within the scope of established order, in the economy of either creation or providence. Yet, there is, in the exhibitions of Divine character, in that established order, sufficient manifestations of interest in the well-being of His creatures and subjects, on the part of God, to render it at least *not improbable* that He *would* exert the power in question, did the well-being of His creatures require its exertion. On this point, we may not now dwell; and we will, therefore, only observe that, both in the creation and government of man, God has evinced a degree of munificence which warrants the belief that no good thing, consistent with the accountable relation of man, will be withholden. Beyond this simple fact, that, if the exigency called for such an exertion of Divine power, as was necessary to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, it is *not improbable* the power *would* be exerted, we consider ourselves wholly dependent on Revelation for all we can know on the subject of that resurrection. And, to the evidences, afforded by Revelation for the attestation of Christ's resurrection, we shall now invite attention; and,

1. A considerable number of persons, of unblemished moral character, respectable for both intellect and intelligence, having no conceivable motive for bearing false testimony in the case, but with very strong inducements to be at least silent with respect to the resurrection of Christ, declare, in the most explicit terms, that they had seen, conversed with, and had frequent opportunities of manual examination of their Master, after He arose from the dead. They knew Him intimately—they saw Him often, not alone in the gloom of night, but also in the light of day—not alone when they were separated from

each other, but when they were together—not at a distance, but in the midst of them—not for a hurried moment, but in long-continued interviews. They could not have been in error as to His identity—they could as easily have erred in regard to their own. They saw His familiar face—they heard the voice which had so often thrilled their hearts with pleasure—they recurred, with Him, to the scenes of their former intercourse—He repeated to them and explained His former teachings. They saw, and probably handled, the scars of those wounds through which He had so recently “poured out His soul unto death.” He called their special attention to His lacerated hands and feet, by which He was nailed to the Cross, and to His pierced side, whence had issued the irrefragable evidences of His death. How was it possible they should mistake in regard to His identity? As little could they err in regard to the fact that He, whom they had seen dead on the Cross, was now alive. They saw Him move, they heard Him speak, they ate and drank with Him. He gave them, as they themselves declare, “infallible signs” of His being alive again.

The account these witnesses give, of the particulars of the resurrection of Christ, is not pretended by them to have been derived from their own personal observation. How they obtained it, they do not inform us—perhaps they received it from the Master Himself. It is exceedingly simple, and truth-like, in the style in which it is related. “A great earthquake,” occasioned by the descent of an angel of the Lord, arouses attention—perhaps it was *intended* to herald the stupendous event which was about to occur. The “angel of the Lord,” which had “descended from heaven, came and rolled back the stone

from the door" (of the sepulchre where the body of Jesus lay) "and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow; and for fear of him the keepers did shake and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women," (who had come to anoint the body of Christ,) "Fear not ye; for, I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay."—*Matthew xxviii, 2-6.* From this simple statement of facts, it appears that it was not by the ministry of the angel that Christ arose from the dead — his ministry extended only to the producing of the earthquake, the rolling away of the stone which shut the entrance to the tomb, the overawing of the guard and the informing of the women of the resurrection of Christ. It was by the power of His own Divinity that the bonds of death were loosed. He had declared that He "had power to lay down His life, and power to take it again." On the Cross, when all was *finished* that was necessary to the accomplishment of His great design in coming into the world, "He gave up the ghost"—or, as some render the original, *dismissed His spirit*—thus exemplifying His power of laying down His life; and, now, on the morning of the third day after His crucifixion, He breaks away from the captivity of death, and lives again by His own divine power, thereby verifying His claim to the power of taking again the life He had laid down.

2. We have already, in a former Discourse, adverted to the astonishing change which the resurrection of Christ produced, upon the character of His disciples—especially of the Apostles. At the time of His apprehension, by the emissaries of the High Priest, during the progress of

His trial, before the Council of the Jews, before Herod and before Pilate, and at the time of His crucifixion, as well as during the gloomy interval between His death and resurrection, those disciples evinced no courage, no magnanimity. They were scattered, as sheep when the shepherd is smitten — they fled from Him, when danger became imminent. Peter, the boldest of all, when challenged as His disciple, repeatedly and with solemn asservations denied all knowledge of Him. One only, John, meekly stood by Him to the last. After He was crucified, moved by fear of the Jews, they sought safety together, in a room, all of whose accesses were carefully closed. Never were good men more disheartened, more unmanned than were these disciples. But, very soon after the resurrection of Christ, we find them, in the most public places about Jerusalem, fearlessly proclaiming themselves the disciples of the crucified Jesus of Nazareth, claiming for Him the dignity and authority of the long-promised Messiah and boldly denouncing the crime of His murder against the rulers in Israel. Threats moved them not; and they even rejoiced, when they were subjected to the scourge, "that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus." This speedy change, in the character of the disciples, is a moral phenomenon, not to be accounted for without the influence of some very efficient cause. What is that cause? What, but the resurrection of Christ; whereby His claim to the Messiahship was incontrovertibly established, and broad, clear, strong light thrown upon the spiritual life and immortality of humanity? Imagining, as they had done, that the Messiah would be a temporal prince, having universal dominion in the earth, making Judea the head of all

nations, and reigning on earth forever; and, having adopted, with full conviction, the opinion that Jesus was the Messiah, they were confounded and disheartened, when they saw Him in the power of His enemies, and, especially, when they witnessed His ignominious death upon the Cross. No wonder, then, that, while they pondered and when they conversed with one another on these things, they were sad. They had "trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel," and exalted her to perpetual dominion over all the nations of the earth; but, they had seen Him "delivered to be condemned," at the tribunal of a subaltern officer of a foreign power, and had witnessed His crucifixion, His death and His burial. In His grave lay entombed all their patriotic hopes, all their personal expectations of aggrandizement, all their warm affections, for a kind, considerate and faithful Friend! How could they be otherwise than sad? But, when the resurrection brought back the loved friend of their society; when, instead of earthly honors, they saw, in the light of His demolished tomb, their high destiny to life-immortal, and glory, surpassing all earthly distinction, at the right hand of God, how naturally were their timid spirits roused to magnanimity, their sadness exchanged for fullness of joy! And, when, instead of seeing their Master head over the nations of the earth, they saw Him exalted to be the "Head of all principalities and powers, both in this world and in that which is to come," and when, instead of temporal deliverance to Israel and her exaltation to the headship of all nations, procured by His victories as a temporal conqueror, they saw in their Master the Redeemer of a ruined world, from a destiny of eternal woe, "to an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that

fadeth not away, eternal in the heavens," how must their bosoms have swelled with rapture! Their Master *is* the Messiah! King of kings! Lord of lords! and of His kingdom there *shall be* no end! This He had ineffectually labored to teach them, during the days of His flesh—now, His resurrection throws the light of immortality upon that teaching, and renders it so plain that "he who runs may read." Hence, the tranquillity of soul, for which recent perturbation had been so speedily exchanged! Hence, their fullness of joy, instead of the sadness and despondency, with which their hearts were so lately oppressed! Hence, too, their undaunted courage, instead of the timidity, which, a short while before, scattered them from the side of their persecuted Friend and Master! We deem this wonderful change, in the state of mind which characterized the disciples of Christ, within a lapse of time so very brief, a most conclusive proof that they knew, beyond all question, that "the Lord was risen indeed!"

3. The third evidence, of the resurrection of Christ, which we shall notice, is the power acquired by His disciples to perform miracles, in attestation of that fact. In this light is the matter regarded by the inspired author of the *Acts of the Apostles, chapter iv, 33*: "With great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." It is true, that this is spoken more especially of that perpetual miracle—the conversion of sinners to God, by the preaching of a crucified and risen Christ, as the Saviour of all that believe on Him; but, it is not spoken of this exclusively of other miraculous works, as is evident from the tenth verse of this chapter: "Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel,

that, by the name of Jesus of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by Him, doth this man stand before you whole." Previously to the death and resurrection of Christ, the apostles preached Jesus as the Messiah, King of Israel, promised in the Old Testament Scriptures; and wrought miracles, in proof that their teaching was according to the mind and will of God. But, after the occurrence of these events, they preached Jesus, especially as the crucified and risen Saviour of mankind—the High Priest and atoning sacrifice for man; who, having "died for our sins, rose again for our justification." And, the miracles they performed were in attestation of the truth of their preaching. In the name of their crucified and risen Master, they cast out Devils, enabled the "lame to leap as a hart," healed the sick and raised to life the dead, without any of those means and appliances which human science employs for such operations as lie within the reach of human skill. The power to perform miracles, that is, to act independently of physical laws, belongs only to God; and, it were monstrous impiety and egregious absurdity to suppose that He would attest a falsehood or a fable, by the exertion of such power. Hence, the miracles wrought in the name of Jesus, *as risen from the dead*, were irrefragable proofs of His resurrection.

We suppose the foregoing exhibition, of the evidences of Christ's resurrection, to be amply sufficient to satisfy every one who receives the New Testament Scriptures as of Divine inspiration, that "the Lord is risen indeed." Of His resurrection, we have no *physical* theory. It lies wholly without the range of natural law. But, is it, therefore, the less credible? Did not He, to whose agency the

resurrection of Christ is attributed, produce nature, and arrange the laws by which that nature is governed? And, can He not, whenever His wisdom and goodness prompt to a suspension of those laws, as easily suspend as He arranged them? And, if not, "why should it be thought incredible that He should raise the dead?" or, in any other matter, act independently of the order, which He established for *general* purposes, when a *special* occasion, of sufficient importance to warrant His doing so, solicits His interference?

That Christ was raised from the dead in the *SAME body* in which He suffered on the Cross, is clearly and emphatically represented to have been the case, by the whole history of the resurrection. But, we have sufficient reason for believing that that body, though the *same*, was not in the *same STATE* that it was before His crucifixion, or that its state was afterwards changed, before He ascended to heaven. An apostle tells us that Christ "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working, whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself."—*Philip.* iii, 21. And, in another place, the same apostle informs us, that in the general resurrection, the body of the saint shall be "raised a spiritual body."—*1 Cor. xv*, 44. The body of Christ, then, in His glorified state, is a *spiritual body*. If, however, the body of Christ was not raised from the dead a spiritual body, but was re-animated in the *same state* in which it was crucified, there will be no difficulty in the case; for, in the interval between His resurrection and His being received up into glory, His body may have experienced that instantaneous change which St. Paul assures us the bodies of the saints, "who are alive and

remain at His coming," to judge the world, will undergo. Perhaps this wonderful change was wrought upon His body, while He stood upon Mount Olivet, awaiting His cloud-chariot and angelic convoy to convey Him up, in glorious triumph, to that heaven, whence, with amazing condescension, He had "descended first into the lowest parts of the earth." Certain it is, that, if the bodies of the saints are to be "fashioned like unto His glorious body," and, if their bodies are to be "raised spiritual bodies," in the general resurrection, either in His resurrection or subsequently, His body was changed from a natural body to a spiritual body. We, upon the whole, incline to the opinion that this change took place subsequently to the resurrection and previously to the ascension into heaven: for, we are assured that the apostles "ate and drank with Him after He was risen from the dead;" and, He said to them, when they doubted the evidence of their sight, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." That the change must have taken place before the ascension into heaven, is rendered indubitable, from the fact that "flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God." May we not humbly suppose that there was a *fitness*, if not a necessity in this change passing upon the body of Christ, *while* He was, in the ordinary sense of the word, *alive*? He is to be "made in all things like unto His brethren." He had died and risen from the dead; as the far greater part of His brethren have done or will do—was it not *proper*, then, that His body should be changed while alive, as were the bodies of Enoch and Elijah, and as will be those of the saints, "who are alive and remain at His coming" to judge the world in righteousness? This circumstance would conform Him, in a matter

of striking peculiarity, to many of His brethren, without in any important sense, establishing an incongruity between Him and the mass of His followers. But, whether the change of His body, from materiality to spirituality, took place in His resurrection or subsequently to it, it certainly did take place before "He passed into the heavens."

Before the rationalist shall deny this, on the ground that it is impossible to change *matter* into *spirit*, let him inform us concerning the *essential* natures of these components of the universe. He knows much of the properties of each, as they exist in the present state of things ; but, does he know that these properties are *essential* to the existences to which they now appertain ? May it not be possible that matter should exist, not only without those properties which now belong to it, but even with properties exactly antagonistic to them ? And, if there be no proper impossibility in this, can He, who created both matter and spirit, have any difficulty in changing the former into the latter ? Who will venture to affirm that the essential nature of *matter* is not the *same* as that of *spirit* ; and, that all that would be necessary to change the *former* into the *latter* would be to remove those properties not essential to its existence but only so to the form of the existence in which we behold it ? We, at least, dare not so affirm ; because we do not know, cannot even conjecture the essential nature of either matter or spirit. We all know that, as *they now exist*, matter and spirit are of incongruous properties—that one of them cannot perform the part assigned to the other, in the economy of nature ; but, we do not know that, had the Creator of both so determined, they might not reciprocally have occupied

each other's places in that economy. It certainly is humiliating to the pride of philosophy thus to point out the limits, within which it is restrained ; but, it were well if philosophy always understood its *ne plus ultra*—the world might then have been saved from many theories, gravely put forth, which might well have been elaborated in the disordered brain of the maniac ; but, which, guaranteed by the sign-manual of great intellect and profound learning, have exercised a commanding influence on the opinions and destiny of large portions of the human family. Great intellects are as much distinguished by knowing where to pause, where to confess incompetency, as by the success with which they explore the vast *commons*, which Infinite Wisdom has spread out for their investigation. It is enough for us to know that the God of truth has informed us that natural, or *material* bodies may and shall be changed into *spiritual* bodies. It is enough, since He, who gives us the information, is to operate the change, by “the working, whereby He is able to subdue all things to Himself.”

We next invite attention to the *purposes* of Christ's resurrection from the dead ; and,

1. His own personal interest in life, would, in the absence of all others, have been a purpose of sufficient importance to call into exertion the power He claimed to “take again the life He had laid down.” Life, to all who live, is of such unspeakable value, that no amount of poverty, oppression or suffering, whether of body or mind, can induce one, in many millions, to relinquish it, one moment sooner than he must. Suppose, then, and the supposition is according to the fact, in the instance of Christ, that life may be resumed with added enjoyments

and the absence of “all the ills that flesh is heir to” on earth, how ineffably desirable would be a return of life! How incalculably important a purpose would be accomplished by His resurrection, if this result alone was secured by it! This return to life was eminently due to Christ; as He had laid down His life for the salvation of mankind. Had He, innocent, holy and righteous before God, remained under the power of death, to which He had submitted for the redemption of a guilty world, His continuance would have been a heinous injustice; and man would have been redeemed at the expense of ruin to his benevolent Redeemer. But, “it was not possible that He should be holden” perpetually in the captivity of death. When the great work of redeeming man was accomplished, He arose, the Spoiler of His previously invincible captor—a glorious conqueror of *him*, who had triumphed over a long succession of human generations. He arose to immortality, to glory transcendent, to happiness that nothing could ever interrupt, and which should know no period.

2. His resurrection, more than anything else, attested His Messiahship. “He was declared to be the Son of God,” (another well-known appellative of the Messiah,) “with power, by His resurrection from the dead.” The wisdom, purity and perfect righteousness of His doctrines and His precepts had rendered it probable that He was the long-hoped-for Messiah—His many, various, benevolent and stupendous miracles had strongly challenged the universal consent of the world to the justness of His claims as the Messiah. And, now, His resurrection from the dead renders disbelief impossible, in regard to the matter, in the case of all who admit that fact. Let us suppose that some eminently wise and good man, of our

own day, proclaiming himself a messenger from God, for some purpose important to ourselves; and, that, to accredit himself to us in that character, besides healing the sick with a touch, opening the eyes of those born blind with clay and spittle, and raising the dead to life with a word, he should announce to us that he should die by the hand of the public executioner, but, that, when he had been dead three days, he would rise from the dead; and, suppose that we had stood by him when he died, and had seen unmistakable evidences that he was dead; and, suppose, further, that, at the time designated by him, he should return to life, and come in and go out among us forty days, evincing all the phenomena of life—could we entertain a doubt that he was the messenger of God he had claimed to be? Human incredulity could not go this length. Unbelief must take refuge in denying the well-proved fact of the resurrection of Christ—it cannot admit this fact, and yet reject His claims to the Messiahship.

3. The success and spread of the Gospel were the result *chiefly* of the resurrection of Christ. This is distinctly affirmed in a passage in the *Acts* already quoted. In the conversion of multitudes from sin to God, the apostles gave strong testimony to the resurrection of Christ; inasmuch as the preaching of that resurrection was mainly instrumental in producing that conversion. And, what can be imagined so well calculated to win souls to God as an exhibition of the “kindness and love of God” through Jesus Christ? What sinner, however hardened in crime, can believe that “God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us”—that “God so loved the

world, that He gave His Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life"—that having expiated our sins by His death, Christ arose from the dead. Who, we say, can believe all this, without feeling heart-rending penitence for sins committed against so great and good a being as God—firm trust and confidence in His willingness and His ability to save those who penitently turn to Him from their sins—devoted love to Him, that hath first and so wonderfully loved us, even in our rebellion against Him, and gratitude, warm, soul-stirring gratitude, prompting to all obedience ? And, this is conversion from sin to God ! And, every instance of such a conversion widens the circle of the Gospel's diffusion, and contributes to the establishment of the kingdom of God among men. The special efficiency of the resurrection of Christ, in producing the conversion in question, results from the fact that that resurrection was the completion of man's redemption, and from the ground of confidence, in His ability "to save to the uttermost all who come unto God by Him," which this Godlike exertion of power affords. Can we doubt that He, who broke away from the captivity of the tomb, can "open the prison-doors to them that are bound," and can break off from us the bondage of corruption, whether derived from our corrupt origin or fixed upon us by our own sinful indulgence ? In the death of Christ, we behold God's hatred of sin, and a reason presented to the Divine Majesty, why ~~He~~ may, without impugning His own justice, extend pardon and favor to sinners—or why we should hate sin, be sorry for it and cast it from us, with loathing, abhorrence and dread, and why we should love God, be grateful to Him and glorify Him by good works. And, in the resurrection of

Christ, we see an ample foundation for the most implicit confidence in the sufficiency of the atonement, God's acceptance of it and Christ's ability to save us, though "the chief of sinners." Hence, the preaching of Christ, crucified and risen—dying for our sins and rising again for our justification—was the means chiefly relied on by the apostles for the success of their ministry. And, this preaching will, to the end of time, be found not only the chief, but, indeed, the only successful instrumentality in the conversion of souls, and in the consequent spread of the Gospel, and establishment of the Redeemer's kingdom in the earth.

4. Christ arose from the dead, for the justification of those whom His death had redeemed. So far as the original transgression was concerned, this justification was absolute, unconditional and final. So that, "as by the offense of one, *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, *the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*" Hence, *none* are now condemned for the original transgression; though Adam and all his posterity in him *were* involved, by that transgression, in condemnation. Christ expiated the guilt, and satisfied the judgment of condemnation that was upon us for that transgression. In regard to personal sins, justification is conditional, though equally proceeding from God in Christ as that in regard to the original transgression. A compliance with a condition infers no merit—no deserving of the benefit dependent on such compliance. Hence, though personal justification is strictly conditional, it is as entirely of *free grace* as if no condition were imposed in order to our obtaining it. Christ arose for our justification, in regard both to the original trans-

gression, and to our own personal sins. The inquiry, how His resurrection conduces to this result ? is one of much interest ; and one upon which, so far as we know, far less attention has been bestowed by Christian teachers, than has been bestowed upon many biblical subjects of greatly inferior importance. It is our intention to go, at some length, into the investigation of this interesting matter ; and,

(1.) We consider the resurrection of Christ as being in the nature of an *acknowledgment of satisfaction*, on the part of the Divine government, of its penal claims upon man for his sins. Christ died for sin—a ransom for the sinner. Had the ransom been inadequate to the claims to be met, we suppose the surety or substitute would not have been discharged ; and, therefore, as Christ was released from the custody of death, by the Almighty Claimant against man, we consider that release equivalent to a full discharge of the claims against man : so, that, the sinner may plead the resurrection of Christ in bar of the claims of the Divine law against him, on account of his sins ; and the plea will be admitted, and he will be justified in the sight of God. This plea, it should be observed, must, in order to its being available, be presented in the manner prescribed in the terms of the Contract or Covenant of redemption. A failure to present the plea, or its presentation otherwise than as directed, will cut off the claim of the individual, so failing, from the advantage resulting from a proper presentation of the plea. Hence, the threat of perdition, under the Gospel dispensation is almost exclusively predicated of such failure—" he that believeth not the Son, shall not see life"—" he that believeth not, shall be damned"—" if

they escaped not, who turned away from Him who spake on earth, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" The resurrection of Christ, then, as an official acknowledgment of the satisfaction rendered by Him of the claims against man for sin, is the immediate instrument of the justification of the sinner in the sight of God.

(2.) We have already intimated that justification, in regard to personal transgressions, is *conditional*. The condition is that the plea be presented to God, that Christ has satisfactorily met the claims against the sinner. The evidence that He has done so, we have attempted to show, is His resurrection from the dead. And, we have said that this plea must be presented in the manner prescribed in the Contract or Covenant of redemption, in order to its being available. The manner of presenting this plea, prescribed in this Contract or Covenant, is as simple as it is rational—it is that the person presenting it have firm and exclusive confidence in the atonement and mediation of Christ for his justification. This is what is meant by "believing on Christ," "faith in Christ." Hence, *justification is by faith alone*. For, though repentance and prayer are required, it is not that they are conditions of justification, but that they prepare the sinner for performing the condition that is required—that is, for believing on Christ. Now, nothing can so directly beget faith in the merits and mediation of Christ, as the fact of His resurrection from the dead—that being, at once, the consummation and the strongest evidence of the finished redemption of man, and a striking manifestation of the absolute sufficiency of Christ to be the Saviour of all for whom He undertakes, and who will come to His terms. Faith being

necessary to justification, and the resurrection of Christ the main instrumentality in producing faith, He was, in this respect, "raised again for our justification."

(3.) It is more than intimated, in the Scriptures of truth, that the sinner needs an Advocate or Intercessor in the presence of God. This office, we are assured, is filled by Jesus Christ. In order to His filling this office, it was indispensable that He should arise from the dead. And, who but He, "who bore our sins in His own body on the tree"—who "put away sin, by the sacrifice of Himself"—who "gave Himself a ransom for all," can be so well, if at all, qualified to advocate the sinner's cause, before the throne of Heaven? But, as this subject will, hereafter, claim our extended notice, we may not pursue it further in the present Discourse. Besides, we have, as we think, made it sufficiently evident that our justification, as sinners, in the sight of God, is, in several important respects, greatly dependent on the resurrection of Christ.

5. Finally, the resurrection of Christ is, at once, the *cause* and the *assurance* of the resurrection awaiting all who shall have died of the human race. This is as clearly affirmed in the Divine Oracles as any other matter whatever. Nay, so emphatic is St. Paul, in his affirmation of these positions, that he concludes decisively, that, "if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised." So intimately related are the resurrection of Christ and that of the human family, in his judgment, that they must stand or fall together. In the nature of man, Christ died, to expiate the guilt of all mankind—in that nature, He also rose from the dead, to restore the immortality, which man had forfeited by the sin, which Christ "put away by the sacrifice of Himself." His resurrection opened the

gates of death, not alone for His own escape, but for the escape also of all who participated in the nature in which He achieved that great enterprise ; and, the fact of His resurrection gave assurance, as well as privilege, of resurrection to all who were “bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh.” We shall cite a few of the scriptures which establish the truth of the positions we have here assumed. “Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept ; for since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For, as in Adam, all die, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive.”—*1 Corinthians xv, 20–22.* “If there be no resurrection of the dead, then is not Christ risen. And, if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain : yea, and we are found false witnesses of God ; because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He raised not up, if so be the dead rise not. For, if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised.”—*1 Corinthians xv, 13–16.* “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to His abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.” *1 Peter, i, 3, 4.*

We shall now close this Discourse by an *interrupted* quotation from the *fourth* part of Dr. Young’s *Night Thoughts*, which clearly, and much more eloquently than we could, expresses our views on the resurrection of Christ—

“Did He rise ?
Hear, O, ye nations ! hear it, O, ye dead !
He rose ! He rose ! He burst the bars of death.

Oh, the burst gates ! crush'd sting ! demolish'd throne !
Last gasp of vanquish'd death, shout earth and heaven,
This sum of good to man ! *Whose* nature, then
Took wing, and mounted with Him from the tomb !
Then I rose, then first, humanity,
Triumphant passed the crystal ports of light,
(Stupendous guest !) and seized eternal youth,
Seized in our name ! E'er since 'tis blasphemous
To call man mortal.

Man all immortal ! hail !
Hail Heaven ! all-lavish of strange gifts to man !
Thine all the glory : man's the boundless bliss !"

DISCOURSE XIII.

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST INTO HEAVEN, AND HIS INTERCESSION FOR MAN.

Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.—Heb. ix, 24.

THE resurrection of Christ was the subject of our meditations, in the last Discourse—in *this* our attention is invited to His ascension into heaven, and His intercession for man, before the Divine Majesty. In the very nature of the thing, there is a manifest impossibility that we should know a jot more of these matters than has been revealed to us—the laws of nature having no operation in their production, and the principles governing them residing in the bosom of the Great Supreme, they are to be understood only as they are developed in the facts by which they are manifested, or by direct *revelation*. The account we have of the ascension of Christ is very brief, and as simple as it is brief. There is no attempt at explanation of the phenomenon—a sparing detail of particulars, and no pomp, display or rhetorical flourish of representation for the sake of effect.

This wonderful event is narrated in a style as simple as unpretending, and as dispassionate as if it had been one of the most common-place and unimportant events that

the narrator could have had occasion to record. Every one must perceive that there is, in this *manner* of narrating a fact, a strong presumption of either entire sincerity in the narrator, or of the most consummate artifice—either that he believes what he says to be truth, or, that, aware that *such* a manner is indicative of truth, he has adopted it with a view to deceive. An adroit impostor might succeed in concealing such art, in the statement of a single incident; but, it is greatly improbable that he should be able, in a narrative of considerable length, and embracing a great variety of stirring events, to maintain a character of *naivete* throughout, as has been done in the Acts of the Apostles, and, indeed, in all the historical portions of the New Testament. We claim the benefit of the presumption, therefore, that the historian of the ascension of Christ was conscious of the entire truthfulness in his statement.

To the account of the ascension of Christ into heaven, we are easily and naturally introduced by the historian, by a rapid, but exceedingly interesting glance at the events which had intervened between that event and the burial of Christ—the resurrection of Christ, His intercourse with His disciples, His instructions, admonitions and promises to them. We shall give this introduction and narrative of the ascension in the language of the evangelist himself: “He showed Himself alive (to the apostles) after His passion, by many infallible proofs—being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God. And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith He, ye have heard of me; for, John

truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence. When they, therefore, were come together, they asked of Him, saying: 'Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?' And, He said unto them: 'It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. But, ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.' And, when He had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And, while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel, which also said: 'Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen Him go into heaven.'”—*Acts i, 3-11.* This narrative of events and of conversations, between Jesus Christ, after His death, and His apostles, who knew Him intimately, is *true*; or, those who furnished the materials for it were guilty of deliberate, conscious and most profane falsehood. How can the latter supposition be reconciled with either the circumstances or the moral character of the apostles, from whom these materials were certainly derived? What motive could have influenced any man, in the circumstances in which the apostles were placed, to fabricate such falsehoods? Not only could they hope for no advantage from them, but, from the fate of their late Master, they must have known that infamy, suffering and death would be incurred by them. All these have been often bravely

encountered, and endured with unblenching fortitude, in the advancement and maintenance of *opinions* which were grossly erroneous; but, is there on record a single instance where men have encountered *certain* hardship and danger, with no reasonable prospect of compensating advantage, in attestation of *simulated facts*, known to be such by those who attested them? We think not; and, we, consequently, conclude that the apostles and St. Luke believed the facts, narrated by the latter, on the authority of the former, to have been facts of actual occurrence. The miraculous character of these facts does not remove the facts themselves beyond the competency of human testimony. The resurrection of a dead man, or the ascension of the risen man, *as mere facts*, would lie as directly within the range of human knowledge and human testimony, as would the return of an absent man, or his setting out on a fresh journey. The *character* of the fact is not a matter of testimony, but a judgment formed of the fact by those who reason upon it. Hence, a miraculous fact can be as fully attested as any other fact; though there may be difficulty in determining the character of the fact, viz. whether it be or be not a miraculous fact. The resurrection and ascension of Christ were *facts*, about which the apostles *could not* be in error. They had seen Him **DEAD**, beyond all question — they, afterwards, were associated with Him *alive* for forty days — they conversed, ate and drank with Him — they, then, saw Him ascend from the midst of them towards heaven. Where, we ask, could there be the possibility of mistake?

We shall notice a few of the circumstances mentioned in this narrative and introduction; and,

1. In the interviews, between the risen Christ and His

apostles, the engrossing subject of His communications to them was the kingdom He was to establish in the world—He spake unto them “of the things pertaining to the kingdom of God;” doubtless endeavoring to spiritualize their conception of that kingdom, as well as laying before them an outline of its constitution, institutions, responsibilities and privileges. Still, they clung to the grossness of their Jewish prejudices on this subject: for, they ask Him: “Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?” He, somewhat sternly, repulses their curiosity, by saying to them: “It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath put” (reserved?) “in His own power,” as if He had said: “This is among the ‘secret things which belong to God,’ and which will baffle the ingenuity of human inquiry, till His purpose shall be developed in the event.” Connected with this repulse, was, however, a consoling assurance that, for all necessary knowledge upon that, and, indeed, upon all other subjects, connected with their relation to Him and His cause, they should “receive power, after that the Holy Ghost was come upon them:” so that they should be competent to “be witnesses unto Him, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” In view of this, He had previously commanded them not to “depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father”—that they should “be baptized with the Holy Ghost;” and promised them that they should receive this baptism “not many days” subsequently to His announcing the promise. We hear of no cavil on the part of any of the apostles; and, therefore, we conclude that, though they had not been entirely freed from their Jewish prejudices, in regard to

the Messiah, they had discarded the overweening self-confidence, which had once prompted Peter, at least, to question the truth of his Master's announcements, and to undertake His correction.

2. While the attention of the apostles was fixed upon their Master, by the important instruction He was imparting to them, "He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight." The special character of the cloud, which enveloped Him from their view, is not indicated; but, is it not probable that it was similar to that cloud into which Moses and Elias entered, when they ascended from the mount of Transfiguration, after their interview with Jesus—"a bright cloud?" And, may we not, without too great presumption, suppose that *that bright cloud* was a galaxy of resplendent angels, who descended to earth to convoy their Supreme Lord in glorious triumph, back to that heaven and throne, which He had forsaken, for the unutterably benevolent purpose of redeeming rebellious man from "under the curse of the law." Never, certainly, was triumph so well deserved! Never was obtained so glorious a victory! Never was conflict so terrible waged! Never was enterprise so benevolent and so disinterested undertaken! He undertook the redemption of rebels against His authority, and enemies against his nature and character, from the just consequences of their horrible delinquency, at the certain sacrifice of His own life, under the enormous weight of their sins—and, He achieved His enterprise; crushing Death by His own fall, and leading captivity captive, when, in His resurrection, He mounted the car of triumph. In His train, we behold the myriads of human beings whom he delivered from their gloomy prison-house; and,

dragged at His chariot wheels, we see their ruthless captors, "Death, and him that had the power of death, that is the Devil," in hopeless captivity, awaiting a doom of utter perdition. The prophetic Psalmist, in the twenty-fourth Psalm, realized the triumphal ascension of the victorious Messiah. After answering the question: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord, and who shall stand in His holy place?" so far as accountable man is concerned, he passes, by a bold transition, to the "Forerunner" of the saints, demanding entrance into this "high and holy place." His entrance is manifestly demanded on the ground of *double right*—first, because He is Jehovah, mighty in battle—victorious in a terrible conflict; and, secondly, because He is Jehovah of Hosts—the true and eternal God. His attendants demand for Him a triumphal admission into His Capitol: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." The response, from the guardians of the gates, is: "Who is this King of glory?" and, the reply from His suite: "The LORD, Strong and Mighty—the LORD mighty in battle." The gate is not opened, and the demand is repeated: "Lift up your heads, O, ye gates, even lift them up ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." Again the question is responded: "Who is the King of glory?" and the reply now is: "The LORD of Hosts, He is the King of glory." Here the Psalmist breaks off; but, we learn from other portions of the sacred Scripture, that the Mighty Conqueror, the God Incarnate, on whose behalf the demand for admittance was so confidently made, *did* enter into the heavens, and "sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high"—the seat of highest honor.

3. The narrative goes on to inform us, that, "while they" (the apostles,) "looked steadfastly toward heaven, as He went up, behold two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven," etc. These two men, in white apparel, were probably holy angels—perhaps eminent saints, who rose, with their Divine Master, from the dead—they certainly were divine messengers, sent to inform the apostles of the true import of the wonderful phenomenon which they were so eagerly contemplating, and to comfort them on the departure of their Master from among them, by the assurance that he would certainly return to them in due time. What we design to notice, is the information given to the apostles, by the celestial messengers, that "Jesus was taken up into heaven." This, were this all the evidence allowed us on the subject, would, in our judgment, be abundantly sufficient to settle the point that *heaven is a place*. Indeed, we cannot conceive of any *limited* existence, without assigning to such existence a *locality*. Nay, we cannot conceive of the existence of Deity Himself, without associating with such conception the *related* idea of place or space, appropriate to the character of his existence. He is infinite; and we, therefore, assign to Him infinite space. Where the place denominated heaven, and to which Jesus was taken up, is situated, it is not in the power of man to *know*. A beautiful, and, we should say, not an improbable conjecture is, that it exists in the *center of the created universe*. Though God exists *everywhere*, and makes His influence to be felt in all parts of creation, the Scriptures everywhere inculcate the idea that in heaven He manifests Himself in a manner

and with a clearness of revelation peculiar to that glorious place. *There* He is seen with open face—the inhabitants dwell in His presence—walk in His light—fall before His face in worship—hear His voice from His throne. His glory, with that of the Lamb, supersede the sun, and moon, and stars, and all artificial illumination, by being “the light of the New Jerusalem.” Hither congregate the *good* from every nation of earth—may we not add, from every world in the universe, and of every class and grade of intelligent and moral beings whom God has called into existence? To this high and holy place, the Messiah, His work of mercy on earth being accomplished, His world-redeeming victory achieved, ascended, in glorious triumph, and “sat down with the Father in His throne.” Behold, then, the Babe of Bethlehem, the “Man of sorrows,” the “Despised and rejected of men,” the *crucified Nazarene*, high-seated in the heavens!—“Head over all principalities and powers!” “All things put under Him”—all, save the Great Supreme Himself! Hear the mandate from the eternal throne: “Let all the angels of God worship Him!” And, see the towering majesty of Michael, prince of the celestial hosts, bowing before His unrivaled dignity! while seraphim and cherubim burn and shine, with intense ardor and brilliancy, in their devotion to Him! And, is *humanity* thus exalted?—thus glorified? How wonderful the condescension of the Divinity, in being incarnated in humanity, for the redemption of a sin-ruined world! How inconceivably magnificent the honors conferred upon the humanity in which that incarnation took place! The mind reels with wonder in contemplating them!

Amid the pomp, the splendor and the unrivaled dignity

to which the Messiah has been so deservedly exalted, will He not forget the humble race to which His humanity belongs? Surrounded by prostrate angels and adoring seraphim and cherubim, lauded by the swelling anthems of celestial choristers, will He hear, will He regard the faint whisper of human thanksgiving, or the feeble wail of human sorrow? Ah! can we hope that He will remember those whom He left in this low, dim, distant vale of earth? Yes: He will — He does remember, with deep sympathy, with heart-warm kindness, the meanest and most insignificant of all those of whose nature He took a part — for whom “He poured out His soul unto death” — whom, by His own resurrection from the dead, He released from the dominion of death, and whose nature He carried in triumph into the seat supreme in the heavens! He remembers them, not with fruitless, inoperative kindness; but, with a kindness ever active, appropriate to their necessities, and so efficient that nothing but their own folly and perverseness can ever defeat its entire success. “He hath gone into heaven **FOR US!**” He hath invested the entire value of His successful enterprise on earth, and pledged the whole dignity of His transcendent exaltation in heaven, for the benefit of man. “He ever liveth, to make intercession for us.” To this intercession our attention is now directed; and we notice,

1. His qualifications for this responsible office. These are many, and of the highest possible order.

(1.) The first of these, we shall mention, is His relation to the Majesty of heaven, to whom the intercession in behalf of man is to be addressed. He is the “Only-begotten,” the “Well-beloved Son” of that Divine Personage — the “Express Image of His Person” —

reflecting, brightly and accurately, His infinite excellencies of character—He is the recognized partner of His throne, sharing, equally with Him, in the authority of universal government—He is embosomed in His Father's affection; and has, at all times, unobstructed access to His presence and counsels. No measure of Divine administration can, therefore, be deliberated on, without His perfect knowledge of its origin and whole bearing. Whatever question, of interest to man, may arise in the Cabinet of heaven, is fully known to the Prince Messiah. And, His relation to the Supreme authority secures Him a prompt and favorable audience on the subject. This, all must perceive, is a qualification, for the office of Intercessor, of vast importance.

(2.) His relation to man, in whose behalf He intercedes, entitles Him to a considerate and indulgent hearing in His intercessions—He is bone of man's bone—flesh of man's flesh—partaker of a common nature with man—his brother, after the flesh. What more natural, more proper, more becoming than that He should seek the welfare of His *own people*?—that He should sympathize in the sorrows of His *kindred*?—that He should plead the cause of His *brother*, when that brother is in distress or danger? Human hearts, though gross and dull in their sympathies, warmly respond to the propriety of such kindred feeling, and such efforts in behalf of kindred. The Incarnate One, then, would, before the dullness and selfishness, even, of a human tribunal, have pleaded the cause of man with the greater success, as being the brother of the race:—how much more before Him, who strung the human bosom with the cords of kindred sympathy, to be ligatures that should hold society in union.

(3.) His personal and official dignity qualifies Him to intercede for man, with a success proportioned to that dignity. Eminent personal worth invests its subjects, in their intercourse with all who contemplate it, with great force of influence: so, that, it is not a little difficult to refuse to those who exhibit it, anything which they may either demand as a right or request as a favor. And, never was there equal personal worth, in any one wearing the human form, to that which characterized the Messiah. In Him, were blended, in absolute perfection, all the moral virtues, under the direction of a wisdom which never erred. This was the fact while He was upon earth, the subject of human infirmities and beset by the temptations which are common to the human race; and, can we doubt that such is the fact with Him, now that all these infirmities have been laid aside, with His discarded mortality, and that He is enthroned in the midst of a society, every member of which is pure and upright, and where temptation can find no place? He is still the Great Exemplar of all who would "walk worthy of God, unto all pleasing"—the model of moral excellence, upon which all must form themselves, if they would "seek for glory, and honor, and immortality," in the highest of all—that is, in moral distinction. What wonder, this being so, that His intercession is of commanding influence! Besides the dignity of personal worth, He has such official dignity as gives immense weight to His intercession for man. He is no stipending advocate—no dependent on public favor, for honor or power. High-raised above all official competition, and above all dependence on those for whom He appears, or on their patrons and favorers, He is not only disinterested in His advocacy, but brings to it, moreover

the full prestige of His incomparable Greatness. This combined dignity, of personal worth and the highest office, confers on Him such a weight of influence as must render His intercession availing.

(4.) He is not only, as we have already said, not a stipendiary advocate, nor merely a volunteer, in pleading the cause of man ; but, He has also entitled Himself to the right of appearing on man's behalf, by the payment of a " price all price beyond." To qualify Himself for, and entitle Himself to the exercise of this office, He assumed the entire amount in which man stood indebted in the account of Eternal Justice, and discharged the obligation to the last item. He has a right, then, on the score of equal justice, to shield man from the law-claims that may be urged against him ; and to exhibit the ample satisfaction which He Himself has rendered to those claims, in bar of their enforcement upon man. How beautifully, poetically and justly has the sweet Psalmist of our Israel expressed all this in a few graphic lines !

" He ever lives above,
For me to intercede ;
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood, to plead ;
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds He bears,
Received on Calvary ;
They pour effectual prayers,
They strongly speak for me ;
' Forgive Him, O forgive,' they cry,
' Nor let that ransom'd sinner die ! '

The Father hears Him pray,
His dear Anointed One :
He cannot turn away
The presence of His Son."

His atoning sacrifice is a prevalent reason, with God, for extending the mercy solicited for man, by his benevolent Advocate. Without that atonement, no plea would have been admissible. With it, no mercy, consistent with the accountable nature of man, and with the integrity of the Divine government, is too great to be conferred on man, at the instance of his propitiatory Intercessor. “He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not, with Him, also freely give us all things?” Shall the *greater* be given, and the *less* withheld—especially, when the *less* is included in or implicated with the *greater*? Surely, such an absurdity could have no place in the proceedings of infinite Wisdom and munificence! And, yet, upon this very absurdity, unbelief often founders as fatally, as if it were the deep-seated rock of truth itself! How often is it the case, that awakened sinners, who believe that Christ died for transgressors of the law *generally*, conclude that, because they have very greatly sinned, God will not have mercy on them, and pardon their sins! Oh, let them remember that it is *as sinners* they are interested in the atonement and advocacy of Christ; and, let them, therefore, though assured that they are “the chief of sinners,” venture, with humble confidence, to claim the mercy and pardon, which they so keenly feel to be necessary to them!

(5.) The omniscience of Christ is an important qualification for His office of Intercessor for man. Frequently it is the case that man himself is so bewildered and perplexed that he knows not what mercy he needs: so, that, if his own unpatronized supplications were current with God, he might fail to obtain, because he would fail to ask for what he needed. But, our Advocate knows all that is

in us—that is acting upon us—that is necessary to us; and can, therefore, precisely adapt His petitions to our wants. He knows all our weaknesses, all our wayward tendencies, all the temptations that assail us, all our defectiveness in piety—in short, all that concerns us He knows; and, he equally knows how to match our necessities with countervailing mercies. How important this qualification, in an Intercessor for ignorant and often self-deluding man! Nothing could compensate for its being wanting in Him who sustains that relation. But, it is not wanting in Him. As God, He is all-knowing. The darkness of moonless, starless midnight no more conceals us from His view, than the clear, bright beams of cloudless noon. Our thoughts and purposes are as intimately known to Him, in their earliest inception in the mind, as they are in the broadest and most perfect development. The enemies who plot against us, may have the subtlety and the deceitfulness of the most practiced diplomatist, even Satan himself; but, they cannot weave a snare of a tissue so involved, but that His penetration can instantly detect its whole contrivance, and His skill disentangle us from its meshes. “He knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation.”

(6.) His participation in our nature, our infirmities and our temptations eminently qualifies Him to be our Advocate—not so much because He knows, from His own experience, in what manner we are tried, as because He can *sympathize* with us in our trials. Thus was the matter viewed by St. Paul. *Heb.* iv, 15: “We have not a High Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but, was, in all points, tempted like as *we are*, yet without sin.” Isaiah, speaking of this sympathy, on

the part of our benevolent Intercessor, says : " In all their afflictions, He was afflicted."—*Chap. Ixiii, 9.* Nothing could so strongly dispose a benevolent person to urgent intervention in behalf of one who was in trouble of any kind, as to have been in similar trouble, and to feel the sympathy kindled by the recollection of having had such experience. Of whom may be expected the most ardent and operative sympathy, by the drenched and shivering sufferer by shipwreck, but of him who has himself struggled in the mighty waters, and been cast alone and helpless upon some rock-bound coast or some dreary island ? Rescued by human kindness or by some other providential intervention, he will, if his heart be in the right place, be always ready to feel for and to succor, to the utmost of his power, all whom he shall see involved in like distress. Go to the chamber where agony gives birth to life and joy. Whom will you there find, shedding the cordial of earnest sympathy upon the fainting sufferer, and tasking all their skill, their activity and their powers of endurance to sustain, comfort and succor, but those who have passed through the same conflict ? Once more : of whom may the famishing wanderer most confidently ask sympathy and bread, but of those conversant with the straits of extreme poverty and the gnawings of life-consuming hunger ? Such, unless recent prosperity, as is too often the case, have encrusted their hearts with intense selfishness and pride, are prompt to hear the claim of pressing want, and to yield to it a moiety of even the last crust. In a word, the experience of calamity is often the best preparative for sympathy, the strongest incitement, after pure benevolence, to deeds of kindness to those who suffer like evils with those involved in that experience.

And, therefore, the experience of human infirmities, sufferings and temptations, by Jesus Christ, is justly viewed, by the apostle, as important, in His qualification as Intercessor for man.

(7.) Finally, the advocacy of man's cause shall never, by death or otherwise, pass out of the hands of Jesus Christ, so long as the necessity for it shall be continued; for, "He EVER LIVETH to make intercession for us." Who does not perceive that any interest, homogeneous in its character, and perpetual in its continuance, must be greatly promoted by an administration equally homogeneous and perpetual? And, the advantage must be still the greater if the administration can be forever continued in the same hands: provided the administrator of the trust be distinguished both for ability and fidelity. Rotation in office can never be desirable, except on the supposition of incompetence or of infidelity to the responsibilities of the office in question. As, therefore, we have seen that, in every view, Jesus Christ is well fitted to be the Advocate of man, before the Eternal Majesty, it is a circumstance of the highest importance to man that "He ever liveth;" and that His tenure, of the office of our Intercessor, is equally ever-during as the occasion for His advocacy. Could we suppose a time, before the consummation of all things, when the Messiah would vacate His Mediatorial throne, we should look upon that era of human existence as covered with the pall of despair. Of that era, it would be true, as it will be with regard to the eternity of the wicked after the judgment, "No patron! Intercessor none! Now past the sweet, the clement, mediatorial hour! Inexorable all!" But, blessed be God! that day of darkness and gloom shall never shut

down upon our guilt-stained world, while the race of man is continued in it in a probationary state. While such shall be the case, He will still "appear in the presence of God for us"—will "live to make intercession for us."

We shall next endeavor to ascertain *for whom* it is that the ascended Messiah "ever liveth to make intercession," before the presence of God. And, we observe that His intercession is for the *whole human race*. He died for the human race *as a whole*. No one doctrine is more clearly or frequently taught, in the word of truth, than this. So numerous, so emphatic and so guarded are the authorities for this affirmation, that we scarcely deem it necessary to cite even one. Every reader of the Bible must recur at once to what is so prominent in Scripture-teaching. We, however, adduce a few:—"He gave Himself a ransom for all." "As, by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, even so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." "God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world, through Him, might be saved." The resurrection of Christ took hold on the human race *as a whole*, and rescued it from the bondage of death. "As, in Adam, all die, even so, in Christ, shall all be made alive." "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in their graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth—they that have done good unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." The ministers of the Gospel are commanded to preach glad tidings—the message of salvation, to the whole human race. "Go ye into all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature." In conformity to this charge, the primitive

preachers did offer salvation equally to all men, whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free, savage or civilized. The tenor of their preaching is seen in an announcement of St. Paul to a mixed audience : "Be it known unto you, therefore; men and brethren, that, through this man" (Christ,) "is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins." This would have been shameless insincerity, in the apostle, had he believed that God, for the glory of His justice, had, from all eternity, foreordained *any man* to eternal death ; inasmuch as he could not know that there were none of that hell-doomed class in his congregation. As, then, Christ died for all mankind, secured the resurrection of all, and commanded that the message of salvation should be proclaimed to all, we feel fully warranted in affirming that His intercession is for all men.

It is for *sinners, as such*. St. John, 1 Epis. ii, 1, 2, says : "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous. And, He is the propitiation for our sins ; and not for ours only, but also for the *sins* of the whole world." He, then, pleads for sinners, *as sinners*. And, how well calculated is this fact, if the sinner would but consider it, to excite contrition in his heart ! Whilst thou, O, careless one ! art regardless of thine eternal well-being—whilst thou mergest all concern for thy best interest in the hurry of business or in the tumult of pleasure—or, whilst thou dozest away thy precious time, in thoughtless inconsideration, He, who died for thee, who rose again, that thou mightest attain to eternal life, watches over thine interests, with sleepless vigilance, and importunes the Divine administration for such mercy to thee, and such blessings upon thee, as are appropriate to thy necessities, and without which thou wouldest soon

awake, to find thyself utterly and forever undone. And, you, O, ye daringly wicked, ye flagrant rebels against Divine authority! ye, “ who set your mouth against the heavens;” who say, “ What is the Almighty, that we should serve Him ?” who rush “ upon the thick bosses of His buckler,” and sin against God with a high hand—who laugh to scorn the invitations of the Gospel, and pour contempt upon the overtures of salvation—you would, long ere this, have been cut down “ in your pride and stoutness of heart,” but that the Great Mediator “ ever liveth to make intercession ” for you, before the throne, against which you are in such open and malignant rebellion.

He intercedes for the *penitent sinner*—for him whose heart is broken and whose spirit is contrite, for having sinned against the authority of God, and against His mercy in Jesus Christ—who trembles at the word of God ; as realizing the justice of its denunciations, the purity of its precepts and his own inability, *unaided*, to comply with them—who is “ feeling after God, if haply he might find Him,” and the import of whose oft-recurring ejaculation is: “ O, that I knew where I might find Him —that I might come even to His seat ! I would order my cause before Him, and fill my mouth with arguments. Behold, I go forward, but He is not there, and backward, but I cannot perceive Him : on the left-hand, where He doth work, but I cannot behold Him ; He hideth Himself on the right-hand, that I cannot see Him ! ”—for such, though we recollect no special declaration to that effect, we feel warranted in believing that the compassionate Advocate intercedes with peculiar sympathy and earnestness. Has He not said : “ Blessed are they that mourn ;

for, they shall be comforted?" And does not Jehovah Himself solemnly and emphatically announce the special interest He takes in persons in this state of mind? "Thus saith the high and lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, 'I dwell in the high and holy place: with Him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.' "—*Isaiah lvii, 15.* Such being the tender regard evinced for the humble penitent, by the high and lofty One, whose distinctive appellative is THE HOLY, can we doubt that the sympathy and intercession of Him, who partakes so largely in human sorrows, are directed especially towards them? The contrary supposition would be utterly incongruous to His compassionate nature, to His sympathy with man in distress and to His office as intercessor for man.

He intercedes for His *justified and regenerated people*. For, no matter what or how high their attainments, they have nothing but what they have received; and would, at any time, were the supply of grace, on which they depend, withholden, fall back upon their native destitution of good, and return to their sinfulness and guilt. Hence, the intercession of their Advocate, and the blessings obtained by that intercession, are as needful to them as they were when they were rioting in sin, or when they were penitent seekers of salvation from it. And, surely, the sympathy of their Advocate will not have lessened, or its activity abated, because they have yielded themselves up to those influences which He Himself has put into operation! This were to suppose Him less kind to the good, than to the sinner,—to the sheep of His fold, than to those who were without,—to His brethren, than to strangers and aliens,—

to those who bear His image and breathe His spirit, than to those whose carnal mind is enmity to Himself, and stamps upon them the image of the “earthly, sensual and devilish.” These suppositions were utterly absurd; and, consequently, we conclude that He intercedes specially for His people.

He intercedes for His Church, as a community of individuals engaged in His service, and set in the world to display His wisdom, His goodness and His power, in the right government of moral beings, and in the salvation of those exposed to various and formidable antagonism. It is in these respects that the Church is, in the Sacred writings, represented as a “light in the world”—a “city, that is set on a hill.” Should the light, emanating from the Church, be lurid, or distorted by passing through disordered media—should the city, set on the hill, exhibit a character of corruption, irregularity or insubordination, the fact of such perversion, from the intention with which the Church was established, would lead to consequences which would be seriously pernicious to the interests of mankind, and derogatory to the Divine glory. Hence the vast importance that the Church should be maintained in a state of purity, regularity and subordination; or, if, at any time, it should become corrupt, disorderly and refractory to Divine authority, proper means should be employed to purge away its defilement, and reduce it to order and subjection to the government of its rightful and righteous Sovereign. With this view, the great Mediator now intercedes for His Church, as He interceded for it in *His valedictory* prayer, when about to be torn, by a violent death, from the immediate superintendence of its interests, and a personal administration of its government.

It remains now to consider *for what benefits*, the ever-living Advocate pleads, in behalf of these various classes which He has taken under His benevolent patronage; and,

1. For mankind, *as a whole*, He claims, as merited by His atonement, a right to all that is *necessary* in order to their salvation. What is thus necessary, depends on so many contingencies that only such a one as our Advocate with the Father can know. Greater facilities are afforded to some than to others; but, to *all*, if there be any congruity in the Divine proceedings, any truth in Scripture teaching, there is granted all that is necessary to this purpose: so, that, all are left "without excuse," if, in the abuse of the power of free agency, with which they are endowed, they should "come short" of salvation. Salvation is, through the merits of Christ's atonement and the efficiency of His mediation, secured *absolutely* to all who die before they arrive at a state of mental and moral development which would qualify them to act the part of moral agents. At what age this competency to moral agency occurs, cannot be known by man. But, there can be no difficulty on the part of Him, who knoweth "what is in man," to determine the point with unerring certainty. It is probable that there is great diversity in this matter. But, though no two, of all the children born into the world, should attain to this competency at precisely the same age, there will be no difficulty in determining when every individual attains to it, with Him to whom accountability is due. Our Divine Teacher, to whom, in the days of His flesh, "little children were brought," said: "Suffer the little children to come unto me"— for, of such is the kingdom of heaven." It matters nothing, to the point

we are now considering, whether the “kingdom of heaven,” here, means the Church on earth, or the state of eternal blessedness; for, he that is a proper subject of the *former*, is secure of an inheritance in the *latter*; unless, by moral delinquency, he alienate that inheritance, which those who have not attained to a competency for free moral agency cannot do; or, whether little children are here declared to be of the kingdom of heaven, or that those who are *like them* are so; for, it would be preposterous to suppose that the *copy* would be admitted into the kingdom of heaven, while the *exemplar* was excluded. Besides the class of which we have just spoken, we have no authority, from the word of God, for believing that one individual of the human race will be absolutely and unconditionally saved: but, we have clear and abundant authority for asserting that all that is necessary in order to salvation will be given to every individual of that race —“The grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath appeared unto all men.” And, this grace comes on account of the merits of Christ, and through His intercession for man. We shall mention but one, of the many provisions that are made for the salvation of redeemed man, and furnished through the intercession of our glorious Advocate with the Father. It is the gift of the Holy Ghost. He is the efficient Agent, in the whole process of human salvation. All else is only instrumentality. He quickens the dead — He enlightens the ignorant — He brings conviction to the conscience of the guilty — He prompts to and inspires prayer — He brings the mind into a position, and the heart into a state of preparation for the exercise of faith — He imparts assurance of justification and adoption through faith — and He sanctifies

the spirit of the faithful believer. But, we dwell not *here* upon the offices of the Holy Spirit. He is sent by the Father — He is sent by Christ. We understand this to mean that He is sent by the Father, at the instance of Christ, or through His intercession. His mission is to all men — He “**REPROVES**” or convinces, “THE WORLD of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.”

2. Christ intercedes for *sinners as such*, to procure for them such instrumentalities as shall be effectual in their salvation, if they yield themselves up to their influence. We cannot specify these instrumentalities. They have respect to the peculiarities of each sinner’s mental and moral condition and to the circumstances and relations in which he is placed, by his birth or other controlling causes. Prosperous and adverse fortune; sickness and health; the acquisition and loss of friends; the abominations of the wicked and the moral excellencies of the righteous; the proud, the insensible or the horrid death of the ungodly and the calm, peaceful or triumphant death of the pious — each of these is rendered instrumental in the salvation of men, and they are sent respectively to those upon whom, from their peculiarity of character, they are most likely to operate successfully. Another purpose of the intercession of Christ for *sinners, as such*, is that their opportunity to obtain salvation may be protracted as long as shall be necessary to determine whether they will or will not embrace it. None, we believe, will be cut off, till this point is settled. That the intercession of Christ has this scope, He, Himself, has taught us, in the parable of the *Barren Fig-tree*. If the sinner yield to the influence of the grace and instrumentality employed to save him, he becomes enlightened, as to his true character and relation

to God; and becomes, in consequence, alarmed at his danger, penitent for his sins and anxiously desirous to flee from the wrath to come, by conciliating the Divine favor, and by securing such a change, in heart and life, as will render him acceptable to God, and "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." He now belongs to the class of *penitent seekers of salvation*. For these,

3. Christ intercedes with His Father, that they may be "led on and instructed" in the way of salvation. Though alarmed at their danger, humbled and penitent for their sins, and anxiously solicitous for salvation, they know not what to do—they know not whither to flee—they know not how to escape the wrath they see impending over them, and to attain to that conformity to God and enjoyment of His favor, which, above all things, their souls desire. They need a continued supply of impulse, to keep awake this salutary, though painful apprehensiveness of soul—they need strength and encouragement, to sustain them, in the arduous struggle in which they are engaged—they need guidance and instruction, in their perplexity and their ignorance in regard to the way of salvation. And, all this is supplied to the sincere penitent and diligent seeker of salvation, through the efficient intercession of their ever-living Advocate. So, that, "He will not suffer the spirit to fail before Him, or the souls which He hath made;" but will secure to them a guide, to lead them "out of darkness into His marvellous light, and from the power of Satan unto God"—will provide an influence, that shall "open their prison-doors"—will procure a mandate, which shall "proclaim deliverance to the captives"—and will obtain for them a full pardon and ample remission of all their sins. At His intercession, there

shall be shed forth, upon the penitent seekers of salvation, an influence which, taking effect upon their entire moral nature, shall "create it anew in Christ Jesus, unto good works." Upon them, will be poured "the spirit of grace and supplication"—in them, will "the Holy Spirit make intercession, with groanings which cannot be uttered :" so, that, their "cry shall enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth." Before their eyes, shall "Jesus Christ be set forth—evidently crucified for them ;" and they shall be endued with "boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." Through this boldness of faith, they shall attain to justification before God ; and, by its moral influence, shall they be "changed, from glory to glory," into the image of Him by whom they were created, "in righteousness and true holiness." And, all the grace, whose influence effects all these great and important changes, is the "gift of God, through Jesus Christ"—through His merit and His intercession for the penitent seeker of salvation.

4. Christ intercedes for His regenerate and justified people. These need strength, to be "steadfast and unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord," and that they may successfully "fight the good fight of faith"—resisting and overcoming "the world, the flesh and the Devil." They need spiritual nutriment, that they may "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ"—that they may "grow up into Him in all things"—till they attain to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, and are filled with all the fullness of God." They need patience, and fortitude, and resolution, that they may "endure unto the end"—"be faithful unto death :" so, that they may "finish their

course with joy," and receive the "crown of life, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give unto all them who love His appearing and kingdom." Now, all this strength, nutriment, patience, fortitude and resolution, "come down from the Father of lights," and are fruits of the intercession of Christ for His followers. He sympathizes in their weakness, knows all their conflicts, surveys all their discouragements, difficulties and dangers; and procures for them "grace to help them in their time of need." If they use the grace given, they shall not only not waver, draw back nor fall; but shall grow up, from little children, to strong young men—to fathers in Christ, and shall be "kept, by the power of God, through faith, to salvation." And, having run well and patiently; fought bravely, and conquered gloriously, "shall sit down with Christ in His throne, as He overcame, and is set down with His Father in His throne"—a consummation worthy our most ardent aspirations!

5. Finally, Christ intercedes for His Church, *as a community of individuals engaged in His service, and set in the world to display His wisdom, goodness and power in the right government of moral beings, and in the salvation of those exposed to various and formidable antagonism.* The manner in which He intercedes for the Church will be best learned from a careful consideration of His prayer, in the *seventeenth chapter* of the Gospel by *St. John*. In the commencement of this act of devotion, the Divine Worshiper notes the arrival of the hour in which the important enterprise, which He came into the world to achieve, was to receive its full accomplishment. He had performed the active part of His mission; and was now just entering upon the last scene of suffering, to which, in undertaking

that enterprise, He had subjected Himself. He exults in the fact, that, in the performance of the part assumed by Him, He had glorified His Father on earth; and prays that His Father would, in like manner, glorify Him—“Glorify Thou me with Thine Ownself, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was!” How amply this prayer was answered, in many circumstances of His death, is seen in the preternatural darkness that hid from view the guilty earth, when her bosom was stained by His sacrilegious murder—perpetrated by the hands of her felon sons—in the earthquake, which rived the rocks asunder, spread dismay among the living, and accompanied the waking of many who had long slept in the dust of the tomb—in the rending, from top to bottom, of the veil, in the temple, which divided between the holy place and the most holy—phenomena, these, which elicited from the centurion, who commanded at His death, the exclamation—“Truly, this was the Son of God!” Especially was this prayer eminently answered in the resurrection from the dead, and in the triumphant ascension of the Suppliant into heaven.

The Divine Suppliant closely adapts His prayer to the interests of His Church, His personal superintendence of which was now to cease. The existing members of that Church had been given to Him out of the world by the Father; and, to them He had “manifested the name of His Father;” He had “given them the words of the Father,” which they had not only received, but also believed. They had especially embraced, as true and worthy of entire confidence, the “testimony which the Father had given of His Son;” and, now, they belonged to Christ, not merely as having been given to Him by the

Father, but also by their own act of adherence to Him, and by the conformity to Him, into which they had been wrought by the transforming influence of their faith. The prayer which He now offers up, He declares to be exclusively for His Church — for those who now believe on Him, and those who, through the instrumentality of these, should afterwards believe on Him — “I pray for them — I pray not for the world, but for them which Thou hast given me.” — *Verse 9.* “Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word.” — *Verse 20.*

This prayer embraces *five* important interests of the Church — interests which will maintain their value undiminished to the end of time. The *first* is *fidelity to her obligation*. The Saviour prays: “Holy Father! keep, through Thine Own name, those whom Thou hast given me!” — *Verse 11.* Many influences would be exerted to turn them aside, or to turn them back from the good way on which they had entered — these influences would be too strong for them, if encountered in their own strength. Hence, the Saviour prays that His Father would keep them, by His power, through faith, to salvation. *Secondly:* The Church is in an enemy’s land — in an insalubrious clime — entangled in difficulties and exposed to dangers. The Saviour prays, not that she should be removed out of these circumstances of trial, conflict and suffering, but that she should be preserved, *unharmed*, while involved in them. “I pray not that Thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that Thou shouldest keep them from the evil.” — *Verse 15.* It is far better to come out of trial unharmed, than not to have been tried, as trials overcome, bring strength, and courage, and patience, and

self-respect to the conqueror. *Thirdly: Purification, by the instrumentality of truth*, is asked for the Church—purification from error in doctrine, corruption in principle and viciousness in practice. The active Agent, in this purification, is God—the instrumentality is the Gospel of truth. Such an Agency, wielding such an instrumentality, is surely competent to the important operation solicited! “Sanctify them, through Thy truth!—Thy Word is truth.”—*Verse 17.* *Fourthly:* The Saviour earnestly, and with reiteration, prays for the *unity* of the Church—unity *within itself*, and unity *with its God and Saviour*. It is not at all likely, we think, that the unity here solicited, is predicated of forms of government, ceremonies of administration or mere opinions; but, of union in the fundamental doctrines of Christianity—in devotion to their common Sovereign—in zeal for the advancement of His cause in the world; and, especially, in that *love*, which is the genius and life of true Christianity, and the strong bond of Christian fellowship. Where *these* exist, union, for all purposes of importance, will exist, even though opinions, ceremonies and forms of government may sectionalize the Church into parties in any conceivable number. *Fifthly:* The Saviour prays that those who serve Him, in a Church-relation, on earth, may be with Him, in His glory, in heaven. “Father! I will that they also, whom Thou hast given me, be with me, where I am; that they may behold my glory.”—*Verse 24.*

In conclusion, we remark, that this prayer for the Church, may, as we apprehend, be considered a fair representation of the intercession of Christ for the Church in all ages. We judge so, because it includes all that is important to the prosperity of the Church within itself;

and all that is necessary in order to its accomplishing the important purposes of its organization. Let it be remarked, however, that the intercession of Christ, is not intended to supersede, in *any* case, the moral agency of man. It will *facilitate* the exercise of that agency for good, whether by the constituent members of the Church, or by individuals; but it will not coerce such exercise in either case. Whatever is necessary, whether in the case of the individual or that of the Church, in order to the pursuing of a right, safe and prosperous course, will be solicited and obtained for both, by the Great Intercessor: but, let none hope to be *compelled* to a course of rectitude, or to be saved, unless he become, to that end a "worker together with God."

DISCOURSE XIV

THE HOLY GHOST AND HIS OFFICES AFFECTING THE SALVATION OF MAN.

The Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.—John vii, 39.

WE have long entertained the opinion that Christian teachers, both writers and preachers, give, in their teaching, less prominence to the Holy Ghost than the importance of His relation to the cause of human salvation, and the example of the New Testament Scriptures would seem to render proper and incumbent on them. Are not the claims of God the Father and of Christ Jesus the Lord, upon the reverence, gratitude and devotion of man, much more frequently and much more urgently presented than those of the Holy Ghost—and, that, too, by honest votaries of the doctrine of Trinity in Unity? Are not His offices and the part which He performs, in the salvation of man, far less frequently brought into view and urged upon the consideration of readers and hearers, than are those of the Father and of the Son? And, why is this the case? Is He of less dignity than the other Divine Persons in the sacred Unity? Are his offices less necessary to the well-being of man, or the part He performs less indispensable, in the accomplishment of human salvation than theirs?

What *trinitarian* will affirm that they are so? And, if He is equal in dignity with the other Persons in the Godhead, and if His offices and operations are equally important with theirs, to the salvation and well-being of man, is it not a fault, in religious teaching, to treat Him and them with comparative neglect? We so regard it; and our purpose, therefore, is, in this Discourse, to present, at considerable length, a scriptural view of the offices and operations of the Holy Ghost, in the great enterprise of human salvation. Of His *distinct* personality and *proper* Divinity, we have spoken fully, in the Discourse on *The Trinity in Unity of the Godhead*. It is not necessary, we think, to repeat what is *there* said; and, to *that* Discourse we refer, for our views upon these points.

Before properly entering upon our subject, we shall make a general remark or two, having a bearing upon the affirmation in the text, that "The Holy Ghost was not yet *given*." The Holy Ghost was an important Actor in the great work of *creation*. By His agency the earth and the solar system itself were brought into the *order*, in which they substantially continue to this day. "The earth being without form and void, and darkness being upon the face of the deep, the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters"—of the confused, unshapen chaos. Immediately, order began to take the place of confusion, and light came to dissipate the darkness in which the embryo world was enveloped. Doubtless, the brooding influence of the Spirit prepared the heterogeneous mass for these important results, and materially contributed to their production. This is rendered *probable*, at least, by the assertion, *Job xxvi*, 13, that God, "by His Spirit, hath garnished the heavens." If He was the agent in marshal-

ing, in their beauteous order, the brilliant hosts of heaven — the sun, the moon and the stars, is it not reasonable to conclude that to Him is due the honor of the order and harmony established throughout all parts of the created universe? Nor, in the government of the moral world, has the Holy Ghost been without an important and leading position, in every age and under every Divine dispensation. Thus: we find Him the medium through which, or, more properly, the agent by whom Christ “preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing.” By “spirits in prison,” we understand the generation before the flood; who, for one hundred and twenty years, *were held under arrest to meet* the doom of the general deluge. For, during so long a term, “the long-suffering of God waited;” and Noah, a preacher of righteousness, moved by the Holy Ghost, proclaimed mercy to them, upon condition of repentance. But, the generation, so indulgently treated, continued rebellious, and were, at last, delivered over to the execution of the sentence, which had so long been suspended by the Divine forbearance. The prediction of future events, or prophecy, was a leading measure, in the Divine proceedings towards men, from the time when it was announced to the original transgressors that *the Seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent* until that prediction was fulfilled, in the glorious triumph of the Messiah over “him that had the power of death, that is, the Devil.” From the New Testament writers, we learn that “prophecy came not, in old time, by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” It is evident, therefore, that our text does

not mean that, before the period at which Christ was glorified, the Holy Ghost had not been occupied in matters of human concernment; but, that the position He was to occupy and the relation He was to sustain to man, *after that event*, were to be not only different from what they were *before*, but more intimate in their connection with man, and more extensively and strikingly important to human interests. Previously to that event, the Holy Ghost was recognised only in occasional operations, subordinate to an *immediate*, supreme administration of the Divine government, first by the Father and then by the Son. After that event, though the Son was to continue supreme in the government of the Church and the world, that government was to be administered *immediately* by the Holy Ghost. Hence, the propriety of the declaration in the text: "The Holy Ghost was not yet *given*; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." We now proceed to consider the offices and operations of the Holy Ghost, under the present dispensation of God's mercy to, and government of the world.

1. We first call attention to what seems to us an isolated fact—that is, a fact having no necessary nor obvious connection with the official position in general of the Holy Ghost, in relation to human interests. We allude to the part performed by Him in the *Incarnation*. Of the *modus operandi*, of putting on humanity, by the Divinity, we know and can know nothing whatever; but, we do know that the humanity of Christ was not produced by the ordinary process of generation—that it was conceived by a Virgin, *without* the loss of virgin-character; and that this conception was induced by the influence of the Holy Ghost, operating upon the Virgin-mother. The fact that

the conception of Christ was produced by the operation of the Holy Ghost, appears to us decisive against the opinion of Dr. A. Clarke, that the *Sonship* of Christ is to be predicated of the incarnation. Were *this* the ground of His *filial* claim, might we not have expected to find that the conception was produced by the operation of the Father? Were Christ the Son of God only in relation to the incarnation, must not the Holy Ghost, by whose operation that incarnation was brought about, be regarded as His Father? The Sonship of the Divinity in the Person of Christ, apart from the humanity, is as clearly taught, as is the Sonship of the Incarnate One Himself. We conclude, from all this, that the opinion of Dr. Clarke on this subject, is as erroneous as he regards that against which he urged it. Be all this as it may, the Agent in the incarnation of Divinity in humanity, in the person of Christ, was the Holy Ghost.

2. The descent of the Holy Ghost, upon Jesus Christ immediately after His Baptism, is, by St. Paul, *Acts* x, 38, represented as anointing of Him to His public ministry, as the Messiah. "God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the Devil." Prophets, priests and kings, under the former dispensation, were sometimes, if not always, anointed with oil, by way of solemn consecration to their respective offices. The anointing of Christ, who was to fill all these offices, was with a far more sacred unction—the antitype of the precious oils prepared for the anointing of Aaron, to the high priesthood, of David, to royalty and of Elijah, to the prophetic office. In these latter cases, the unction was merely emblematical—in that of Christ, it was

intrinsically efficacious — conveying the virtues and the energy which were only signified by that of the others. In the setting apart of Jesus Christ, to the important offices He was to fill, as the Messiah, as well as in operating the incarnation of Divinity in the humanity, in the person of Christ, the functions of the Holy Ghost were of primary importance and of high dignity — exhibiting Him in the light of taking a leading part in the transcendently benevolent enterprise of man's redemption and salvation. In this great work, all the Persons in the Godhead took prominent and efficient part. The Father "so loved the world that He gave His Only-begotten Son," to die for it:—the Son, "because the children were partakers of flesh and blood, also, Himself, likewise, took part of the same; that, through death," He might "redeem man from under the curse of the law;" and, the Holy Ghost, by His influence on the Virgin Mary, enabled her to become the instrument of the incarnation, and by His descent upon the recently baptized Jesus of Nazareth, consecrated Him to the Messiahship — to be Prophet, Priest and King, for the instruction, redemption and salvation of all who would receive and submit to Him. "Here the whole Deity is known!"

3. The Holy Ghost was a Witness to Christ — attesting the Divine authority of His mission into the world. This attestation was first given by *action*. When Jesus Christ was baptized by John the Baptist, as He came up from the water, the Holy Ghost descended upon Him in the form of a dove; and, at the same time, a voice was heard from heaven, proclaiming: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." — *Matthew* iii, 16; *Mark* i, 10; *Luke* iii, 22; and *John* i, 32-34. That this descent of

the Holy Ghost upon Jesus, was an attestation of His being the Messiah — the Son of God, we learn from the testimony of John the Baptist, *John* i, 33. Speaking of Jesus, he says: “I knew Him not; but, He that sent me to baptize with water, said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost”—a clear and an unequivocal designation of the Messiah! This testimony, to the Messiahship of Jesus, was exhibited in the commencement of His public ministry. A fuller, though not a more explicit attestation to the same purpose, is given, after His resurrection from the dead. Peter, with the concurrence of the other apostles, declares, *Acts* v, 30, 31, to his Jewish audience, that “The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with His right hand *to be* a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance unto Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are His witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him.” And, so important, in the estimation of St. Paul, is the testimony and influence of the Holy Ghost, in making manifest the claim of Jesus to the Messiahship, that He says, *1 Cor.* xii, 3: “No man can say that ‘Jesus is Lord,’ but by the Holy Ghost.” Not only, then, has the Holy Ghost witnessed *generally* to the claims of Jesus to the Messiahship, but He affords distinct and convincing evidence of the validity of those claims to every individual who submits to and is governed by His guidance and influence.

4. The Holy Ghost, with plenary power, administers the government of the kingdom which the Messiah has established in the earth: so, that, from the day of Pentecost,

when the Holy Ghost was given, until the consummation of all things, has been appropriately denominated *The dispensation of the Holy Ghost*, as former dispensations were called *the dispensation of the Father*, and *the dispensation of Christ, or the Son*. As *they* were, in their respective dispensations, the prominent actors, in the great enterprise of human amelioration and salvation, so is *He*, in this dispensation. This, it is our purpose to exemplify in several particulars; and,

(1.) He has clearly revealed the mode in which men, rebels and aliens by nature, may be admitted to the *rights* and *immunities* of Messiah's kingdom. Though much information, in regard to this important matter, had been previously communicated to man, it was not until the Holy Ghost came upon the disciples, on the day of Pentecost, that it was made entirely clear. Immediately after that event, the apostles preached "repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ," with such effect that multitudes were "cut to the heart, and cried out," to the apostles: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And, upon their being instructed to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," they accepted *Him*, with firm trust and confidence, as their all-sufficient Saviour and rightful Sovereign; and all who did so, were "justified from all from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses"—were converted—"created in Christ Jesus unto good works," and were adopted, as children of God, and "fellow-citizens with the saints." The terms of admission, into the kingdom of the Messiah, are the same to all — to Jew and Gentile, bond and free, wise and unwise, to whom the Gospel is published. It was by the express authority of the Holy Ghost that "the middle wall of partition" between Jews

and Gentiles, was taken down, and both made to stand on the same platform, so far as regarded a participation in the benefits of Christ's kingdom: so, that, thenceforth, there was "no difference between the Jew and the Greek," but the Jews were to be "saved even as they."

(2.) The Holy Ghost organized and continues in operation a system of *instrumentalities*, to promote the "increase and government" of the kingdom in His charge. The chief of these is the Ministry of the Gospel. In the primitive Church, there were several *orders* in this ministry. Some of these, we suppose, were peculiar to the occasion of *founding* the Church. This, we apprehend, was remarkably the case with the *order of apostles*. The apostles were evidently invested with *universal* pastoral authority. And, there is not the slightest evidence, in the Sacred Writings, that this universal pastorate was distributed into episcopal and archiepiscopal dioceses, and assigned, distributively, to the thirteen or fourteen apostles. On the contrary, it is evident to us, that, where any apostle happened to be, his pastoral jurisdiction was admitted without question. It is true, that, by agreement, Paul and Barnabas *usually* bestowed their labors among the Gentiles; while James, Peter and John *more especially* ministered to those of the circumcision; yet, we think it is unquestionable that Peter, at least, *sometimes* ministered to the Gentiles; and, we *know* that Paul was in the frequent habit of ministering to the Jews, up to the time of his being sent prisoner to Rome. Now, nothing ever has existed in the Church, since apostolic times, bearing any respectable resemblance to this universal pastorate of the apostles. The pretense that diocesan bishops are successors and representatives of

the apostles, as an *order* of Christian ministers, is simply ridiculous—having no show of rational support, in the sacred Scriptures, in ecclesiastical history or in the nature of the case. As little resemblance do the Pope and college of cardinals bear to the apostles, who were equal to each other in authority; interchangeably and with full power, laboring in the same field and going everywhere to preach the Gospel. The evangelists constituted another *order* of primitive ministers, which, as they exercised the authority of apostles in the fields of labor assigned them, in absence of an apostle, were, we think, intended to have place only during the *formative* period of the Church. If they have any representatives in modern times, they are found in *itinerant missionaries*, whose business it is to found Churches, wherever the Gospel brings men to the knowledge of salvation, and to appoint in them the *ordinary* officers, permanently requisite in the Church. These, we conceive, are presbyters, or bishops, and deacons, or servants of the Church. That the terms presbyter and bishop indicate the *same* order of ministers, in the Church, no man of competent understanding can or will deny. And, we go farther and affirm that there is not, in the whole New Testament, a single intimation that there existed, in the primitive Church, an episcopal order, distinguished from or superior to presbyters. At what period, an *official* distinction, of this kind, was introduced into the Church, is here a matter of no consequence—it is enough to know that it did not belong to the constitution of the Church, as organized by the apostles, under the supervision of the Holy Ghost. The *order* of deacons, or servants of the Church, did belong to it. These, though sometimes preachers of the Gospel, were not, we appre-

hend, always so, nor, consequently, were they so in virtue of their office of deacon.

Not only were the orders of the ministry, both extraordinary and permanent, instituted by the Holy Ghost, but the *men*, proper to be admitted into these orders, except, perhaps, that of deacons, were *personally* and *directly* selected and *called* by Him. That He has not relinquished or abated His right of making this selection, and moving the person selected to compliance with His requisition, is, we believe, adopted in the creed of almost every sect and denomination of Christians, which professes to found itself upon the Word of God. It is true, that too many adopt this principle with a latitude of signification that entirely nullifies its import. Still, the requirement that those who offer to the Church, for ministerial orders, should declare that they are "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost, to take upon themselves" such orders, is a recognition of the permanently *active* prerogative of the Holy Ghost to perform this important function in the government of the Church. The unwise ordinations, of most of the Churches, that none shall be admitted to these orders without qualifications conferred by human agency, are calculated, practically, to suspend the exercise of this prerogative on the part of the Holy Ghost. It has ever been the case, that men, who have been organized into Church relations, have soon become, in their own imaginations, "wise above what is written;" and, consequently, have considered themselves called upon to improve what God has ordained, by emendations, if not by downright substitutions, originating in their own superior wisdom! There is, we think, now in existence scarcely one branch of the Christian Church, which did not, in its palmy days,

allow *unlettered* men to preach the Gospel, after the homely example of primitive Christianity. How many of those sects *now* require, as a *sine qua non*, a certain amount of *liberal* education, as well as a long course of theological training, in order to admission into the ministry! And, are not other Churches, whose success, by means of an *unlearned* ministry, has thrown the glory upon Him, to whom it should redound, in a manner and to a degree unexampled in any contemporary sect, which boasts a learned ministry, hastening to a conclusion very similar to that so wisely adopted by the Israelites, when they resolved that they would have a king, *like the nations that were around them*? Whenever these Churches shall have theological institutions in general operation, they will require high literary and theological qualifications in those whom they admit to the ministry—the exercise of His prerogative, of selecting for the ministry, will be practically denied by them to the Holy Ghost—and *Ichabod* may be written on their banners; for, “the glory will have departed” from them.

The other *instrumentalities*, instituted by the Holy Ghost, or adopted by Him, in His administration of the government in Messiah’s kingdom, are *Church-fellowship, Social Worship and the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper*. The first of these is vastly important, being adapted to one of the strongest tendencies in human nature—*the love of society*. Man is eminently a social being; and, whether for good or evil, society exercises a prevailing influence with almost every individual of the human race. Church-fellowship, then, which brings together men of like predilections in piety, is calculated to render every individual more intelligent, more steadfast,

more confident and better contented than he could be, if honestly pursuing a course of piety *alone*. So important, to the individual engaged in a Christian course, is association with others pursuing a like course, that, were it not an imposed duty to enter into Church-fellowship, it would be the part of wisdom to do it, at almost any sacrifice, as a matter of privilege. “How can one be warm alone? Woe to him that is alone when he falleth! As iron sharpeneth iron, so doth the countenance of a man his friend. Two are better than one. A three-fold cord is not easily broken.” But, we need not insist on a matter so universally understood and assented to as is the advantage of society: we shall, therefore, only further remark that, owing to the many and violent antagonisms with which it must contend, a life of piety peculiarly needs that advantage.

Social Worship, consisting in *prayer and singing praise to God*, is another instrumentality of great importance and efficacy. Occasions are continually occurring, in which greater wisdom or power is required, in order to safety and happiness, than belongs to individuals or to society. In cases of this kind, man is permitted and encouraged to invoke the aid of the All-wise—the Almighty; and, though individual and private prayers have assurances of a favorable audience, whenever rightly addressed to the Father of mercies, there is peculiar emphasis in the promise that is given to *social* prayer: “If two of you shall agree on earth, as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven.”—*Matthew xviii, 19.* There is, we suppose, no more efficacy in the prayer of two or of ten thousand, than there is in that of a single individual; but, the *moral*

effect of social prayer is such—heart kindling heart, devotion deepening devotion and faith strengthening faith in those who pray together, as to warrant peculiar urgency in enforcing the duty of engaging in it, and peculiar encouragement to enjoy so advantageous a privilege. No religious community ever did or ever will flourish, in vital godliness, unless social worship is maintained in it; and, no such community ever did or ever will languish, where social worship is habitually, frequently and fervently offered up, by any considerable proportion of its members. Where this is the case, reverence to, and habitual dependence on God; a relish for sacred things, and an aspiration after conformity to Him will be certain to characterize those who are thus occupied in social worship to the “High and Holy One.” Individual piety, as well as the prosperity of the community, will be promoted, in exact proportion to the diligence and earnestness with which this duty is performed, under the direction of the Word of God.

Baptism and the *Lord's Supper* are instrumentalities, designed and calculated to promote the prosperity of Messiah's kingdom. They are both *representative* and *sacramental* in their character. The *former* represents the Baptism of the Holy Ghost—the cleansing of man's moral nature, by the influence of the Holy Spirit:—the *latter* represents the sacrifice which Christ made of Himself once for all mankind, through the merit of which, all may attain to pardon of sins, and to a meetness for “the inheritance of the saints in light.” Both these ordinances have been regarded, by large portions of the Christian world, as far more important, in the economy of human salvation, than, in the sacred Scriptures, they are repre-

sented to be; and, the latter especially, has been the subject of as gross superstition as ever stultified the human understanding. We mean, of course, the superstition that, in the Lord's Supper, the *real* body and blood of Christ are received, swallowed and appropriated by digestion! To render this superstition the more revoltingly absurd, it supposes that ordinary bread and wine are, by the manipulations and invocations of the priests, changed into that real body and blood! That such profane nonsense has ever had one votary out of Bedlam, is passing strange — that it should be a prominent article in the creed of a community, which claims to be the only true Church, is stranger than any fiction in Munchausen or the Arabian Nights, and is deemed possible only because it is a notorious fact. In their representative character, these ordinances are of great value; and, so they are in their sacramental. Baptism pledges its subject to the service of God, for the whole of subsequent life; and, is, therefore, the appropriate ordinance by which man is initiated into the kingdom or Church of the Messiah. The Lord's Supper is a renewal of the pledge given in Baptism. Both, when rightly administered, and, especially, when rightly regarded by the recipient, are means of grace, of great efficiency; but, like all other instrumentalities, they are of no value, nay, they become a curse to those who receive them improperly, or as mere ceremonies. We do not find any importance or sacredness, superior to that of other Christian institutions — prayer, for instance — ascribed by Holy Writ to either of these ordinances. It is true, that there are thrilling memories and touching associations in the Lord's Supper, well calculated to render it more impressive than other religious observances. But,

we shall seek, in the sacred Scriptures, in vain for the superior importance which this ordinance has obtained in the estimation of so many.

(3.) The Holy Ghost has supplied a *code of laws*, for the moral government of the Messiah's kingdom under His administration. All the laws embraced in that code, had been, we believe, communicated, with more or less clearness, previously to the day of Pentecost; but, after that day, they were set forth with more of system in their arrangement; a more exact representation of their necessity in the condition of man and of the tendency of their influence, both upon individuals and upon society, and, especially, with a clear and more forcible exhibition of the sanction, by which they are enforced. The moral requirements of the New Testament are admitted, by candid infidels themselves, to be superior in purity, in their adaptedness to the wants of human nature and in their conservative tendency upon the interests of man in society, to any system of ethics ever offered to the consideration of man, or urged upon his observance. What, more than anything else, distinguishes the morality of the New Testament, and elevates it above all competition, is the fact that its chief restraints are laid upon the springs of moral action. True: the actions themselves are legislated for; but, the stress of moral requirement is upon the heart—the fountain whence moral good and evil, in action, always proceed. The philosophy of Gospel-morality is, that “if the tree be made good, the fruit will be good also”—that a pure heart will secure the maintenance of a “good conscience”—of a “conscience void of offense, both towards God and towards men.”

We have thus far *assumed* that these functions of

administration, in the government of the Messiah's kingdom, are performed by the Holy Ghost. This assumption we shall now attempt to support, by producing some of the evidences of its truth which are afforded by the New Testament Scriptures, *Acts v, 3*: "And Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie unto the Holy Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land?" The evidence, that supreme authority, in the administration of the Messiah's kingdom, was vested in the Holy Ghost, found in this passage, is, though indirect, perfectly conclusive. For the promotion of the interests of that kingdom, Barnabas and others had consecrated their possessions, and had placed them in the hands of the apostles, to be, by them, appropriated to that object. Ananias pretended to do the same thing, while he only surrendered a part of those possessions. The apostles were the ostensible parties with whom Ananias transacted this affair—yet, Peter says, in effect, that the transaction was not properly with them, but with the Holy Ghost. This could be true, only on the supposition that to the Holy Ghost belonged supreme authority in the administration of affairs in the Church, under whom the apostles were only subordinate officers, or, more properly, mere *ministers*. If the interests of the Church or kingdom of Christ were committed to the supreme direction and guardianship of the Holy Ghost, then was it "to the Holy Ghost" that Ananias lied, when he pretended a greater contribution to those interests than he had actually made. *Acts xv, 28*: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." A question had arisen in the Church, 'whether it was necessary, under the Messiah's reign, as it had been in the

foregoing dispensation, that a man should be circumcised in order to the enjoyment of the rights and privileges belonging to a subject of His government?' It is manifest that the apostles had not authority to settle this question. Only the supreme authority was competent to do it; and, as it was settled by the Holy Ghost, the apostles, of course, concurring, it is evident that to the Holy Ghost belonged that supreme authority. *Acts* xiii, 2-4: "The Holy Ghost said: 'Separate me Barnabas and Saul, for the work whereunto I have called them.' . So, they, being sent forth by the Holy Ghost," etc. *Acts* xx, 28: "The Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood." These passages conclusively affirm that the selection and employment of ministers of the Gospel were by the Holy Ghost. We deem it wholly unnecessary to pursue the matter any further—satisfied that it has been rendered indubitable that to the Holy Ghost is committed the supreme administration of the Messiah's kingdom on earth.

5. The Holy Ghost has authenticated His claim to supreme administrative authority in the kingdom of the Messiah, by the exhibition of *miraculous* power in its support.

(1.) The *prediction* of future contingent events, with truth and certainty, is as clearly miraculous as the raising of the dead to life; and, He, who can enable man so to predict, has miraculous power. The exercise of this power, to confirm an affirmation, or in attestation of a claim to authority, is the highest possible evidence that could be produced in the case, inasmuch as it is a pledge of Divine truth, by the exercise of Divine power, in behalf of the truth of the affirmation so confirmed, or of

the validity of the claim so attested. Thus did the Holy Ghost authenticate His claim to the supreme administrative authority in the Church, by enabling the disciples to prophesy, or predict future contingent events. Indeed, in all ages, men prophesied only "as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." He is exclusively the "Spirit of prophecy." *Acts* ii, 17, 18: "I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy. And, on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days, of my Spirit; and they shall prophesy." *Acts* xxi, 11: "Thus saith the Holy Ghost: 'So shall the Jews, at Jerusalem bind the man that owneth this girdle.'" *1 Cor.* xii, 8-10: "To one is given, by the Spirit, the word of wisdom. . . . to another prophecy." *1 Tim.* iv, 1: "Now, the Spirit speaketh expressly, that, in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of Devils." Thus, we have the power of predicting future contingent events expressly ascribed to the Holy Ghost; and several instances of such predictions, which, by having been fulfilled, are seen to have been uttered with truth and certainty.

(2.) He authenticated the high claim in question, by enabling men both to speak intelligibly in languages they had never learned, and to interpret those languages correctly, when spoken by others. We are inclined to the opinion, that, on the day of Pentecost, the miracle of tongues consisted, not in the *speaking*, by the apostles, of the various languages which were heard by the mixed multitude, who understood the apostles in the languages in which they themselves had been educated, but in the *hearing* of those variously-tongued auditors. The effect upon the

auditors would have been precisely the same, whether the miracle were in the *speaking*, or in the *hearing*; while, on the supposition that it was in the *hearing*, every one in the audience, *at the same time*, might understand every apostle who spoke: whereas, if the miracle were in the *speaking*, each speaker *at any given time*, could be understood only by that part of the multitude who understood the particular language in which he was speaking. Be this as it may, the power of *speaking* in languages never learned, was, for a considerable time, one of the miraculous gifts of the Holy Ghost to the teachers of the Christian Church; as was, also, the power of interpreting those languages. This, in the propagation of the Gospel, in the many-tongued earth, was of great importance, not merely as a miraculous authentication of the Gospel, but as an instrumentality in that propagation. How vastly would such a power, at this day, promote the spread of the Gospel among the heathen! How greatly would it facilitate the operations of Missionaries among them—say, among the Chinese—if those Missionaries had the gift of tongues, so that they could *immediately* proclaim the Gospel to them in their own language, instead of having to communicate it to them, by the onerous and almost always greatly defective mode of speaking through an interpreter.

(3.) The Holy Ghost authenticated His supreme administrative authority, by enabling His servants to perform the miracles of healing the sick and the lame, and of restoring the dead to life. Instances of these miracles are numerous; but, they are so familiar to the knowledge and recollection of most persons, who have the Bible in their possession, that it is not deemed necessary to cite them. The lame man, cured by Peter and John,

Eneas, the multitudes cured of diseases, by *even indirect* communication with the apostles—the restoration of Dorcas, by Peter, and that of Eutychus, by Paul, are matters with which there is so much familiarity as to render it wholly superfluous to dwell upon them. The power of performing these miracles is ascribed to the effusion of the Holy Ghost upon those who performed them; though, in their performance, the name of Jesus was invoked. In this matter, and, indeed, in all others having relevancy, the regal authority of Christ, in His kingdom, is recognized; while the supreme *administrative* authority is claimed for the Holy Ghost, and authenticated to Him by infallible attestation.

(4.) He authenticated His claim to this authority, by rendering the preaching of the Gospel “the power of God unto salvation,” in thousands of thousands of instances. The first sermon that was preached, after the Holy Ghost came upon the apostles, on the day of Pentecost, was so effectual, in the conversion of sinners, that three thousand were added to the number of the disciples! After this, while yet the apostles confined their preaching to Jerusalem, we hear of “multitudes, both of men and women, who believed” the Gospel, and were added to the Church in that city. Even a “great company of the priests”—the least likely, perhaps, of any of the various classes to whom the Gospel was preached—“were obedient to the faith.” Soon, moreover, the preachers of the Gospel were thrust out of Jerusalem, into the wide fields of the world, to preach everywhere the Gospel of salvation to perishing sinners; and, wherever they preached that Gospel, whether to Jews or Gentiles, whether at Samaria or Caesarea, the Holy Ghost accompanied and rendered effectual the word

of His grace : so, that, in less than half a century from the time when the Founder of Christianity hung, in ignominy, on the Cross, His disciples were found, in great numbers, in almost every nation under heaven, of which history has preserved any contemporary information. Mighty Rome, learned Greece, luxurious Asia, degraded Africa, the islands of the seas sent up, in their own languages and styles of speaking, one common Hymn, caught from the choristers of heaven : “Glory to God, in the highest ! on earth, peace, and good will unto men !” “God hath sent His Son, Jesus, to bless us, in turning away every one of us from our iniquities ;” and “hath exalted Him to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins.” “To Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, be glory, and honor, and might, and dominion both now and forever !” And, ever since, when the Gospel is anywhere “preached, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven,” it is “mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strongholds” of sin and Satan, and to the building up of the kingdom of Christ on earth. And, what could more clearly authenticate the supreme administrative authority of the Holy Ghost in that kingdom than this ?

6. The Holy Ghost is *personally* engaged in carrying on the administration of the kingdom of the Messiah, both in extending its authority over those who are “aliens from the Commonwealth of Israel” and in regulating its internal affairs. We notice especially,

(1.) That He *reproves*, or *convinces the world*—the men that “know not God,” that “are strangers to the covenant of promise”—*of sin*—quicken their moral nature, “dead in trespasses and sins,” into new life and

sensibility—opens their eyes to the purity, authority and inflexibility of the Divine law, to their obligation to be conformed to its requirements, to their fearful delinquency to that obligation, and to their consequent condemnation by the law. This, when yielded to on the part of the sinner, excites alarm, humiliation, penitence and an anxious desire to “flee from the wrath to come,” and prompts to corresponding efforts. He, then, *reproves*, or *convinces of righteousness*—manifests to the awakened and alarmed sinner, who is penitently and anxiously seeking salvation, God’s method of justifying, or rendering righteous those who have sinned against Him—setting before him Jesus Christ, the Righteous, crucified, for the expiation of his sins, risen again for his justification and gone to His Father in heaven, to intercede for him before the offended Majesty: thus affording to his faith an adequate object; upon whom, “whosoever believeth, shall not perish, but have everlasting life.” And, finally, He *reproves*, or *convinces* the disciple, whom He is leading out from the world into the kingdom of Christ, *of judgment*—of the judgment which has gone against the *prince of this world*—the ruling influence, which operates in the hearts of the fallen children of men—that it is to be “cast out”—the “old man must be crucified, with his affections and lusts.” Not only must the life be reformed, but the heart must be changed, till “every imagination of the thought of the heart shall be brought into captivity to the obedience of Christ.” Thus does the Holy Ghost “work in men, to will and to do of the good pleasure of God;” and if the sinner, thus impelled and assisted, “work out his own salvation, with fear and trembling,” he will be “trans-

lated into the kingdom of God's dear Son," which consists in "righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."

(2.) The Holy Ghost authenticates the justification and conversion, or new-birth of the sinner, by "sealing him" with the impression of the Divine image; thus witnessing to God the genuineness of the change which has passed upon both his legal relation and his moral state, and attesting his right to all the privileges of a child of God, and a subject of Messiah's kingdom. His rights and privileges are thus made *patent*, by the administrative authority of the Holy Ghost.

(3.) The Holy Ghost witnesses the same important matters to the justified and converted sinner himself. This is important, both for the comfort of the subject of these important changes, and for the moral influence which a knowledge of such changes is calculated to exert. What could so effectually excite gratitude, love and devotion to God as a knowledge that our sins, which were so many and so great, are all forgiven, for the sake of the Redeemer's merits?—that our moral natures, which were all corruption and perverseness, are purified and harmonized with the will of God?—and, that our state, which was lost, undone and ruined, is retrieved and rendered safe and happy, by the changes wrought in us, by the grace and Spirit of God? It is, surely, worthy the benevolence of God, and His care for the purity and rectitude of His moral creatures, to impart a knowledge of the changes which have passed on them, to the justified and regenerated, since that knowledge is vastly important alike to their happiness and to their moral perfection! The knowledge, so imparted, is clear and unequivocal, communicated *directly* to the consciousness, and not left

to be obtained by a slow, and doubtful process of metaphysical reasonings. It is witnessed immediately, to the spirit of the subject of these changes, by the Spirit of God. Thus, under the impulse and guidance of the Holy Ghost, the sinner has been "brought out of darkness, into marvelous light—from the kingdom of Satan, to God;" and is now a "fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God."

That the changes, in the justified and converted sinner's condition, have been operated immediately by the influence of the Holy Spirit, using various instrumentalities, particularly the preaching of the Gospel, or, occasionally, with no appreciable means, is abundantly and clearly taught in the Divine Word. *John* vi, 63: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." *2 Corinthians* iii, 6: "The Spirit giveth life." *Ephesians* ii, 1: "You *hath He quickened*, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Thus, we see, it is by the Holy Ghost that those who are dead in trespasses and sins, are quickened, and so rendered susceptible of Divine influence, and capable of performing the part assigned to them, in order to their salvation. *Ephesians* v, 13: "All things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for, whatsoever doth make manifest is light." *John* xiv, 26: "The Comforter, *which* is the Holy Ghost." *John* xvi, 7-11: "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come; but, if I depart, I will send Him unto you. And, when **He** is come, **He** will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment—of sin, because they believe not on **me**—of righteousness, because I go to my Father—of judgment, because the Prince of this world is judged." It is, then, the Holy Ghost who enlightens those who are in darkness, convinces them of the error of their way,

excites penitence and a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and prompts to correspondent efforts. Usually, these efforts are unavailing, for a longer or shorter time, being made with more or less dependence on their *intrinsic* availability; for, so long as man expects pardon *because* of his penitence or reformation, just so long will his efforts prove ineffectual. True: he must be penitent, and he must reform, in order to his receiving pardon; but, pardon will never be granted *on account of* penitence and reformation. Convinced, at length, of this truth, the penitent sinner anxiously inquires, "What must I do to be saved?" And, the Holy Ghost sets before his mind, with a clearness of revelation and a force of exhibition capable of exciting faith, or firm trust and confidence in Him, "Jesus Christ, evidently crucified for him"—as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world"—as "set forth, to be a propitiation, through faith in His blood; to declare His righteousness, for the remission of sins that are past." Thus is the penitent instructed; and he is thus enabled to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, with a heart unto righteousness." And, this faith "justifies the ungodly." And, to this faith, he is wrought by the influence of the Holy Ghost. Simultaneously with justification, and coming through the same faith, is that change of moral nature, which is so great—so all-pervading as to be, in the sacred Scriptures, characterized as a being "born again"—"created, in Christ Jesus, to good works"—made a "new creature." And, this change is operated by the Holy Ghost. *John* iii, 5–8: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit. Marvel not that I

said unto thee, 'ye must be born again.' The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." *Romans xv, 16*: "That the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." *1 Corinthians vi, 11*: "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." *2 Corinthians iii, 17, 18*: "Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But, we all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed, into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." *Galatians v, 22, 23*: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." *Titus iii, 5*: "He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." Much might be added, to the above clear and strong exhibitions of the *personal* agency of the Holy Ghost, in the change of man's moral nature; without which he cannot be a subject of the kingdom of Christ on earth, or share in the "inheritance of the saints in light." But, we consider what has been produced amply sufficient, as it clearly shows that "whosoever is led by the Spirit of God"—who yields himself up, submissively and heartily, to the guidance of the Holy Ghost—"is a son of God;" and, "if a son, then an heir of God and joint heir with Christ, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven," for those "who are kept by the power of God, through faith unto salvation."

That the Holy Ghost authenticates the justification and conversion of the sinner, by sealing him with the impress

of the Divine image—the broad seal of administrative authority—is sufficiently declared in *Ephesians* i, 13: “Ye are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise”—*Ephesians* iv, 30: “Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption”—and 2 *Cor.* iii, 18: “We all, with open face, beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed, into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Nor, is the fact, of his attesting these important changes, *directly*, to the justified and converted sinner himself, less clearly taught in the Sacred Oracles. *Romans* viii, 16: “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” *Gal.* iv, 6: “Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying Abba! Father!”

7. In regulating the internal affairs of the kingdom, into which he has translated the sinner, who has submitted to be led by Him, the Holy Ghost,

(1.) Imparts all needful *instruction*, to the subjects of that kingdom. Not only has He, as the Inspirer of all revealed truth, given to those subjects *general* directions, by which their conduct is to be regulated on all ordinary occasions, but it is promised that, on extraordinary occasions, He will supply to each individual the counsel which his emergency may require. The mode of imparting this counsel, must, of course, be regulated by the circumstances of each case; and cannot, therefore, be reduced under any general rule of procedure. Sometimes, it is done by providential events, so strongly impressed on the imagination and the heart, by an influence for which the subjects themselves are wholly unable to account, with a force which secures to them a degree of moral efficiency they

do not usually possess. At other times, a single word, frequently, in itself, by no means pregnant with important significance, is a center, to which are attracted feelings and reflections calculated to exercise vast influence upon character and destination. Frequently, there are motions within us, which we can trace to no origin external to our own minds, and directly in opposition to our settled modes of thinking and feeling, but irresistibly commanding themselves to the approval of our judgment, by their intrinsic propriety and manifestly useful tendency. In all these cases, we suppose it is the Holy Ghost, who makes upon us the impressions which tend to our moral improvement and eternal salvation. We think so, because we have assurance, on the highest authority, that He will afford *such* influences to the people of God who need them. *Luke* xii, 12: "The Holy Ghost will teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." *John* xiv, 26: "The Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." *John* xvi, 13, 14: "When He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all truth; for, He shall not speak of Himself, but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and, He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for, He shall receive of mine and shall show it unto you." *Acts* xx, 23: "The Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me." *1 Cor.* ii, 9-13; "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But, God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for, the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep

things of God. For, what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of a man, which is in him? Even so, the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth." These passages of Scripture exhibit the Holy Ghost as both a public *general* Teacher of the Church, and as a special guide and instructor of the individuals constituting that Church.

(2.) The Holy Ghost is the Comforter of the children of God — the subjects of Christ's kingdom — dwelling in them, as in a hallowed temple; and, besides assuring them of their justification, their acceptance with God and their adoption as His children, He affords them succor in the time of temptation, prompts and inspires fervent and effectual prayer, in every time of need, sheds the love of God abroad in their hearts, and brings every imagination of their thoughts into captivity to the obedience of Christ: so, that, "He lays the rough paths of peevish nature even, and opens in their breast a little heaven," of calmness, tranquillity and serenity; and, finally, He inspires and sustains in them a lively hope — a hope full of joy — full of glory; which takes hold on the inheritance, in heaven, "incorruptible, and undefiled and that faileth not away." That He dwells in the hearts of saints, is clearly taught in the Divine word. *1 Cor. vi, 19*: "Know ye not that your bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God?" *2 Tim. i, 14*: "That good thing which was committed to thee, keep, by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us." The purpose for

which He dwells in the saints, is, that He may afford them the aid and comfort which their situation may require. They are exposed to the hostility of foes, who are inveterate in their malignity and far too powerful to be successfully resisted by any power inherent in man. The Holy Ghost is in them, to defend them against these enemies; and, if they resist steadfastly, under His direction and patronage, they shall come off "more than conquerors." *Isaiah* lix, 19: "When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." *1 Cor.* x, 13: "There hath no temptation taken you, but such as is common to men; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will, with the temptation, also make a way for your escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Thus, we see that the people of God are not exempted from temptation, sudden and overwhelming, when not successfully opposed; but, that God has given assurance, that, to those who "resist, steadfast in the faith," there shall be afforded needful aid, and that the agent, in supplying that aid, is the Holy Ghost; who, raising, against the proudest and mightiest of those who assault the people of God, the standard of the Messiah, will put them to flight, and crown the assailed with glorious victory. The Holy Ghost dwells in the hearts of God's people, to supply them with grace, whereby they may "grow up into Christ, in all things;" that, "having nourishment ministered," they may attain to "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." *Rom.* v, 5: "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost given unto us." This love is the most efficient of moral influences, having a direct tendency to purify the heart.

from all that would be offensive to the eye of that Holy Being who is its object, and to render him, who is animated by it, solicitous, above all things, to be conformed, in his entire character, to the excellencies of the Divine object of his supreme affection. He dwells in the hearts of the saints, to impart to them strength, for the performance of duty, however arduous; for the endurance of trials, however severe, and for "patient continuance in well-doing," however protracted its term, however great the discouragements attendant on it. *Ephes.* iii, 16: "Strengthened with might, by this Spirit, in the inner man." The indwelling Holy Ghost prompts to and inspires prayer. Understanding the wants of those under His care, and knowing intimately the mind of God, He can, at all times, dictate the prayer that should be offered up; and, by His influence upon the heart of the suppliant, can animate the prayer with requisite fervor. In this way, He makes in us, "intercession for us"—inspiring our prayers with His own energy, as well as directing them by His intelligence. *Romans* viii, 26, 27: "Likewise, the Spirit helpeth our infirmities; for, we know not what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us, with groanings which cannot be uttered. And He that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because He maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God" *Ephesians* ii, 18: "Through Him, we both" (Jews and Gentiles,) "have access, by one Spirit, unto the Father." *Ephesians* vi, 18: "Praying, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit." *Jude* 20: "Praying in the Holy Ghost" The Holy Ghost, dwelling in the heart, by faith, is an earnest of future blessedness, and consequently the Inspirer of hope, full of joy, full of

glory. *2 Cor.* v, 5: "Now, He that hath wrought us for the self-same thing is God, who hath given us the earnest of the Spirit." *Ephes.* i, 13, 14: "In whom" (Christ,) "also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession." *Rom.* v, 5: "Hope maketh not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts, by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." And, in this hope, so produced by the Holy Ghost, the children of God, *1 Peter* i, 8, 9, are enabled to "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls." This joy, in the Holy Ghost, in hope of the glory of God—in prospect and assurance of "an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away," not only exceeds all other joy, but its fullness is commensurate with the utmost capacity of man, in his present imperfect state. It is pure and elevated in its character, permanent and uncloying in its influence, and adequate to human capacity for enjoyment. It is, then, justly characterized as "unspeakable and full of glory." And, thus is the Holy Ghost the Comforter of those who constitute the Church or kingdom of Christ, by teaching them, succoring them, nourishing them, prompting and inspiring in them fervent and effectual prayer, and originating and maintaining in them a joyful hope of eternal blessedness with God, after this short, fitful scene of life shall have come to a close. And, well does He justify the application of the title, which is appropriated to Him! No other consolation is so rational, so accommodated to all the varied scenes of life, so heart-filling, so enduring as that which He communicates. Nay, in

comparison with this consolation, all other consolation is as nothing.

8. Finally, the Holy Ghost is the medium of *union* and fellowship among the subjects of the Messiah's kingdom. It is His influence that "fashioneth their hearts alike"—that renders them of "one heart and of one mind"—that disposes them to "bear one another's burdens," to "weep with those that weep and to rejoice with those that do rejoice." His ardor kindles their hearts into mutual love, and the oil of His grace keeps the fire ever burning, with undiminished, even with still increasing flame. *Ephesians* iv, 2, 3 : "With all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love: endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. *Philip.* ii, 1-3 : "If there be, therefore, any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but, in lowliness of mind, let each esteem other better than himself." We have before suggested—*see the last preceding Discourse*—that Christian union and fellowship may exist, though opinions, in regard to doctrines of minor importance, the ceremonials of religion and forms of ecclesiastical government may have divided the Church into any conceivable number of sects. It is evident, from the passages of Scripture we have just cited, that unanimity of opinion and community of interest and feeling were not deemed essential to this union and fellowship. For, where they exist, there can be no occasion for the exercise of *meekness*, *long-suffering* and *forbearance*, which the apostle requires, in order to the

"keeping of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Where meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, gentleness and kindness characterize the intercourse of Christians, whether belonging to the same sect, worshiping with the same ceremonials and governed by the same ecclesiastical rule or not, there will be found union of heart, fellowship of spirit, sympathy of feeling and mutual helpfulness towards each other's faith and joy. They will have one Lord, for their moral government, one faith, in order to their salvation, one baptism, whatever the mode of its administration, dedicating them to the service of God and the interest of His cause, and one hope of their calling to a common and an ineffably glorious inheritance in heaven. And, to this high and holy unity, they will have been wrought by the influence of the Holy Ghost.

DISCOURSE XV.

REPENTANCE TOWARD GOD.

God * * * * commandeth all men, everywhere, to repent.—*Acts xvii, 30.*

IN our six last Discourses, we have dwelt upon what God has done for the recovery of man from the ruin, in which he was involved by his original transgression. This we have represented as being absolutely effectual, so far as concerned the *guilt* of that transgression, and, consequently, so far as concerned the salvation of all who had not returned under the curse of the law, from which they were redeemed by the death of Christ; which they could do only by personal transgression. We also hinted our opinion that ample provision was made, in the death of Christ, for the recovery of personal offenders from under that curse; but, that this provision was not to be absolutely and unconditionally available to any personal transgressor. If this opinion be correct, and we have no doubt of its correctness, it is of vast importance that we understand the *terms* upon which we may avail ourselves of this provision, so as to secure our salvation. The suspending of our salvation upon the condition of our coming to the terms upon which it is offered, no more detracts from the absolute benevolence of the Giver, nor any more infers

merit in him who complies with the terms proposed, than does compliance with the terms, on which a gratuity is offered to a beggar or a pauper, entitle him to the benefit conferred, or detract from the simple benevolence of him who conferred the benefit. And, this is the more strikingly the case, inasmuch as both the disposition and the power to comply with the stipulated terms, are, in the instance of man's salvation, the result of influences exerted upon man by Him who offers the salvation and prescribes the terms on which it must be received. If God did not "work in man, to will and to do of His good pleasure," man would not, and, indeed, could not "work out his own salvation," by coming to the terms on which it is offered.

There are two terms stipulated, with which the sinner, where the Gospel-message is heard, *must* comply, in order to his salvation. Indeed, the spirit of these requirements must be complied with by all men everywhere, in order to their salvation; though, from the fact of their not being instructed in the matter, they may not be able to render a literal compliance with them. These terms are *repentance toward God*, and *faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*. The *former* of these, is not to be regarded in the light of a *condition* of salvation, but as a *moral fitness* to receive it. Strictly speaking, there is only one condition of justification—that is *faith in the Lord Jesus Christ*. Yet, the sinner *needs* to be prepared by *repentance toward God*, both for the exercise of *that* faith, and to receive the justification, of which *that* faith is the condition. The whole tenor of New Testament teaching goes to represent repentance as not only important in, but indispensable to, the sinner's coming to salvation. It was the first requirement in the preaching of, not only John the Baptist, but of Christ

Himself. It was prominent, if not first, in the preaching of St. Peter, after the Holy Ghost came upon him and the other apostles, on the day of Pentecost. St. Paul represents it as, equally with faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ, a theme of his constant preaching, both to Jews and Gentiles. And, our Saviour, to show its vast importance—nay, its indispensable necessity, in the business of salvation, solemnly declares to His hearers, that *except they would repent, they should perish*. We conceive, then, that we do not err in placing a Discourse on this subject in a *series* designed to be *fundamental* in their character. We consider repentance as indispensable to the salvation of a *personal transgressor*, as was the death of Christ itself, though on wholly different grounds. The *former* is necessary on the ground of *moral fitness*—implying no merit in the performer, no claim, on the score of obligation, to the salvation, to the obtaining of which it is indispensable: whereas, the *latter* meets and satisfies the claims of violated law and outraged authority, with a merit adequate to those claims, and to the dignity of that authority. The *former* is a simple performance of incumbent duty—the *latter* is a voluntary intervention of a disinterested party, prompted by benevolence. The vicarious death of Christ, for man's redemption, entitles Him to universal and eternal praise—not to repent, infers eternal infamy to the sinner. Though, then, repentance and the death of Christ are both indispensable to the salvation of the personal transgressor, the *former* shares none of the glory due to the *latter* on account of that salvation. As, therefore, repentance toward God is indispensable to the salvation of personal transgressors, let us, who all belong to this description of persons, attend, with

becoming concern, to the discussion of a theme so vitally important to us. We shall,

I. Consider some things that are necessarily presupposed by repentance toward God ;

II. Endeavor to ascertain the nature of the repentance required in the text ; and,

III. Attempt to ascertain the purposes to be accomplished by repentance in the economy of salvation.

I. We are to *consider some things that are necessarily presupposed by repentance toward God* ; and,

1. *Moral wrong* is presupposed by repentance. As, therefore, "all men everywhere" are commanded to repent, all men everywhere are held to be guilty of moral wrong. Moral wrong supposes obligation to do, or to refrain from doing ; and this obligation implies moral agency on the part of him who lies under such obligation, and an authority which rightfully imposes that obligation. On a former occasion, we contemplated God as the Creator of man ; as having, therefore, the most unquestionable right to the *use* of man, in the employment of all the capabilities, physical, mental and moral, with which He endued him. The *principle* of this right, we observed, is universally recognized among men ; and, if the invention or construction of any valuable operative entitles the inventor or constructor to a right of use, in such operative, how much more must creation confer that right, since, not only is the operative invented and constructed, in the instance of creation, but the materials employed and the laws applied, in its invention and construction, are produced ? Of the authority of God over man, then, no question can exist. But, is man a moral agent, capable, as such, of moral obligation ? Intelligence and power to choose, in

any given case, without constraint *of any kind*, we have considered necessary to moral agency; and, these, we have ascribed to man. That man has intelligence, to discern between right and wrong in morals, none will deny. And, that he has freedom, entire freedom of choice, appears to us absolutely necessary to his moral agency, without which he would be incapable of responsibility, of rewards or of punishments. The extent of man's obligation to God, is commensurate with his moral capability. To extend the obligation a hair's breadth beyond this measure, would be unjust to man—to suppose that obligation less than that measure, would derogate from the right of God to the use of His creature in the employment of all his capabilities. Accordingly, we find all the moral capabilities of man put in requisition for the service of God, in such requirements as these: "Glorify God, in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"—"whether ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with *all* thy heart, and with *all* thy mind, and with *all* thy soul, and with *all* thy strength." In one word, man is required to *devote himself* to the service of God. Not to do this, is moral wrong—a violation of moral obligation—a sin against God. The text supposes that all men are involved in this moral wrong; inasmuch as it commands *all men everywhere to repent*. A very slight acquaintance with the moral history of mankind, in all ages and in all countries, will abundantly verify this melancholy supposition. The Divine scrutiny could find not a single exception; for, when the great Heart-searcher "looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were *any* that did understand, that did seek God," He saw that

“every one of them was gone back;” that “they were altogether become filthy;” that “there was none that did good—no, not one.” Hence, St. John declares that “if we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” Many, there may be, who have, all their lifetime, shunned, perhaps abhorred, those sins which infer disgrace in the eyes of men, in whose mouth the boast of the Pharisee would be simple truth, who never perpetrated murder, fraud, or uncleanness, or debasing excess in either eating or drinking: who have maintained a decent respect for the forms of religion, and an honorable and a courteous bearing towards their fellow-men, of all ranks and conditions. But, where has there ever been found the individual, of Adam’s perverted race, who has always “loved God with *all* his heart, soul, mind and strength?”—that has always acted with an “eye single to the glory of God?” And, yet, if, though but for a single moment, a man has been *wanting in these moral characteristics*, he is guilty of moral wrong of the deepest dye. He has violated the highest and most sacred obligation that ever was or could be imposed upon a moral agent. If *filial* irreverence and disobedience justly shock the sensibility of the right-hearted, and if the most gloomy prognostics of future delinquency and evil fortune are warranted, in regard to children who display such irreverence and disobedience, what shall be said of the guilt and danger of those who disregard the obligation they are under to their Creator, whose *paternal* claims are as much more important than those of a “father of our flesh,” as a cause is more important than an instrument. He, Himself, labors to convince his creatures of their iniquity, by this very mode of reasoning. He says: “A

son honoreth his father—if, then, I be a Father, where is mine honor?” We see not how the conclusion can be evaded, that he who withholds what God, his Creator, requires of him, is guilty of moral wrong; or, how it can be possible for any sober-minded man to deny that “all men everywhere” have done this; and, that, consequently, “all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.”

2. Repentance toward God presupposes a conviction, on the part of him who repents, of the moral wrong of which he has been guilty. There is much more implied in this conviction than a single assent of the mind to the truth of the proposition that “all have sinned.” This assent is given, in thousands of instances, with quite as much indifference, and with as little moral effect as accompany acquiescence in the most unimportant matters of intelligence that are communicated to the mind on any subject whatever. The conviction, which is presupposed by repentance, recognizes the dignity of the authority which has been insulted by the moral wrong committed—the sacredness of the obligation which was violated by it—the justice of the requirement disregarded in its perpetration, and the consequent heinousness of the guilt incurred by it. And, all this is no barren generality, but is made a matter of individual and personal accusation against the repenting sinner, by this conviction. Hence, where this conviction is established in the mind, insensibility and indifference find no place. The whole soul is aroused. Alarm, apprehension, anxiety, and, especially sorrow—heart-rending, soul-subduing sorrow—are excited. The convicted sinner exclaims, in the anguish of these mingled emotions, “O, wretched man that I am! Who

shall deliver me from the body of this death !” “God be merciful to me, a sinner !”

This conviction is not, however, the result of reasonings upon moral fitness, however exactly it may, when established in the mind, accord to the justest appreciation of that fitness. Were the mind unperverted and unblinded, its reasoning, upon moral fitness, would inevitably result in such a conviction. But, such, alas ! is not the fact. The mind is perverted, bewildered and blinded, by the stultifying influence of sin : so, that, while under condemnation by the law, and, while “dead in trespasses and sins,” the sinner, as did Pharasaic Saul of Tarsus, very often exults in the testimony of “*a good conscience*,” and glories in the persuasion that “he is alive”—alive to God, spiritually, morally alive ! “The light that is in him being darkness” he sees imperfectly the state of his own heart, and the spirit of the Divine law ; and, self-love, taking advantage of the imperfection of the medium through which he contemplates these important objects of speculation, exhibits before him a view of *both* as unjust as it is flattering to himself. A purer, brighter light, than glows in the human mind, must be thrown upon these subjects, ere they can be seen in their true character by the sinner. A measure of that light is afforded to every man—a measure, too, sufficient, if improved, to lead to the discovery of truth, in these important matters. But, the first influence of this light is *always* painful ; and, too often, men “love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil,” and, therefore, exclude it from their minds, before it has sufficiently illuminated them to show the revolting foulness of that “cage of unclean birds,” that loathsome sepulchre—a corrupt heart—a heart estranged

from God. When, however, the light imparted is freely admitted into the mind, and when the eyes of the understanding, opened to receive its revelations, are turned upon the purity, breadth and high authority of the “commandment”—the law of God—when, moreover, the character of the sinner is brought into comparison with the requirements of that law, conviction of moral wrong follows, with all the force of demonstration, and with all the astounding influence of judicial condemnation. All this is accomplished by that Divine Spirit, who “reproves,” or *convinces*, “the world of sin, of righteousness and of judgment.” The instrumentality, *usually* employed by Him, is the “Word of God, which is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow; and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” But, in this important work, the Holy Spirit is *restrained* to no special instrumentality, nor, indeed, to any instrumentality whatever. He can, and, we think it certain, He often does, work conviction of sin in the mind, without the employment of any means—by *direct* impressions made upon the mind and the heart of the sinner. But, whether the operation is by direct influence, by extraordinary instrumentality or by the influence of the Divine Word, the result is substantially the same—the sinner is convicted, in his own conscience, of sin against God. Sin against God is filial irreverence and disobedience—is ingratitude, to an infinitely kind Benefactor—is rebellion, against the just authority and righteous government of the Universal Sovereign! No other crime could equal this in magnitude and aggravation of circumstances—no other guilt could equal the guilt of

this enormity; and, in the light of this conviction, it is clearly seen that no punishment can possibly exceed the demerit of this monstrous and aggravated criminality.

3. Repentance toward God presupposes *sorrow*—sorrow for having offended God, called in Scripture *godly sorrow*. The sinner is often sorry that he has involved himself in difficulties, subjected himself to disgrace among men and exposed himself to danger, whether in time or eternity, by his sinful courses. But, sorrow, on account of any of these consequences of his sin, does not dispose the sinner to repentance— is not sorrow for having sinned, is not sorrow toward God— is not godly sorrow. This sorrow is wholly selfish in its character, and regards the consequences of sin, and not the sin itself. Godly sorrow, on the contrary, has chief respect to the moral turpitude of sin, and its offensive character in the sight of God. The infinitely holy character of God, His benevolence to man and the justice of His claims upon the service of man, as well as the righteousness of the service required of man, enter largely into this sorrow, indeed, they are its chief ingredients. The sinner contrasts his own moral impurity with the holiness of God, and abhors himself—he places his disregard of God, and of His just claims upon him in the light of the Divine benevolence, so wonderfully manifested, especially in the “gift of His Son, to redeem man from under the curse of the law,” and a sense of his ingratitude, so black, so base, overwhelms him with shame and confusion—he contemplates himself as an irreverent and a refractory son, to a wise, a kind and a most venerable father, and as a rebel against the just authority of the most righteous and beneficent government, and is filled with remorse and self-condemnation; and all this excites

in him a sorrow as bitter as any of which the human bosom is susceptible. He grieves that he has exhibited himself in a character so utterly unworthy his high position as a rational and moral being — that he has offended the wisest, the greatest and the best of beings by his self-degradation and rebellion against rightful authority, that he has shown himself so heartlessly ungrateful to One, whose merciful kindness has been so great, so long-suffering towards him. Sorrow, like this, cannot be inoperative. And, its operation will be to better the moral condition of those who are under its influence.

We have said that this godly sorrow is *presupposed* by repentance toward God. We are not ignorant that many speak of godly sorrow as but another name for repentance; and that more, we might say most, of those who write or speak of repentance toward God, represent godly sorrow as a part of repentance. Now, unless *cause* and *effect* are identical — unless the *agent* and his *work* be the same thing; or, unless St. Paul either misunderstood or misrepresented the matter, godly sorrow is, neither in whole nor in part, the repentance required in the Gospel; for, he expressly declares that “godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, not to be repented of.” If, then, godly sorrow worketh repentance, that sorrow is presupposed by repentance, just as any other agency is presupposed by its proper effect. Nor, is the distinction here maintained, between godly sorrow and repentance, important *solely* because it rescues a Scriptural truth from the error in which it has been involved, but because very serious mistakes may, and, we fear, have resulted from this error. Repentance is not a state of the affections merely, but a modification of the moral character, induced by a certain

state of the affections. And, it being much easier to err in regard to the character of a mental state, than it is in regard to a modification of moral character, error, in regard to repentance, would be much more probable were godly sorrow repentance, than, if, as is the case, repentance is a modification of moral character, induced by godly sorrow. For instance: a man has disgraced himself, in the estimation of his fellow-men, by some sin, say theft; and he is heartily sorry that he has so disgraced himself. Now, as sin is the occasion of his disgrace, is he not in much danger of supposing that, while he is really sorrowing on account of his disgrace, he is sorrowing for the sin which produced that disgrace? And, if he confound godly sorrow and repentance, will he not conclude that he has repented, inasmuch as he has been sorry for the disgrace brought upon him by his sin? But, could he fall into a like error, if repentance be understood by him to be, not sorrow, but the moral results of godly sorrow, in the modification of his moral character? We think it would be much more difficult to err in the latter than in the former case. We shall,

II. Endeavor to ascertain the nature of the repentance required in the text.

Repentance being, as we have seen, the product of godly sorrow, the best method of ascertaining its nature, is, we conceive, to inquire what effects godly sorrow will produce upon the moral character of one in whom its influence is predominant. We have represented godly sorrow as arising from a just appreciation of the odious nature of sin itself, rather than from a regard to the pernicious influence it exerts upon our personal condition, whether in time or in eternity; and, as being mainly produced by

a view of unworthy conduct towards God, the Father, Benefactor and rightful Sovereign of man. Such being the causes of godly sorrow, it is calculated,

1. To produce intense *hatred of sin*, no matter what its form, or the estimation in which it is held by the world. In the case of him, who is really sorry that he has sinned, it is sufficient to be convinced that any state of the affections, any pursuit of pleasure, wealth or fame, any association is sinful, to inspire him with utter repugnance to it. It may exhibit to the eye of sense, or passion, or pride, a thousand charms, a thousand fascinations—it may have all the beauty and majesty, with which Milton has imagined its face and bust; but, godly sorrow fails not to detect the snaky folds, which lurk amid the mazes of drapery, by which they are attempted to be concealed; and loathing and abhorrence are aroused, against the fair-seeming object. Whatever pretensions to regard sin may put forward, the brand of infamy can be seen upon it, by the eye of godly sorrow. It is rebellion against God—it is ingratitude toward Him—it is moral degradation and corruption in him who cherishes it in his bosom! Hence, it is hated, loathed, abhorred.

2. Godly sorrow induces *humility*. Humility is, by no means identical with meanness, notwithstanding they are often confounded with each other. Humility is the estimate formed by a man of himself, when he is sensible that there is, in his moral state, that which is derogatory to his dignity. Meanness is a tendency to low, unworthy and wicked conduct; and may, and very often does, consist with pride and high pretensions. Humility is one of the surest safeguards against meanness; as it proceeds from a high appreciation of moral purity and integrity. Godly

sorrow is calculated to produce this humility; because it derives its existence from a high estimate of moral obligation, and from a conviction that he, in whom it has been excited, has been shamefully recreant to that obligation. How can he fail to be humble, who concedes the justness of the claims which God has upon him, and who is conscious of utter delinquency in regard to those claims? What could be more humiliating than a conviction, in his own conscience, that, instead of the reverence and honor, which he was most sacredly obliged to render to God, his Creator, he has displayed, toward Him, indifference, neglect, contempt and disobedience: that, instead of the gratitude, love and devotion which were due from him to God, his bounteous Benefactor, he has forgotten Him, even while reveling in the profusion of His bounties, and has preferred to Him, the vilest and worst of his own enemies, who were also the enemies of God: that, he has been refractory to and rebellious against the rightful authority and righteous government of God, his Sovereign! All high pretension must cower before convictions of this kind, before a sorrow so excited. Like the truly penitent publican, he will be so much abashed, so abased in his own eyes, that "he will not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven," but, smiting upon his breast, as the natural expression of an anguish too bitter for language to utter, will exclaim: "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" This is the only plea his humble view of himself will allow him to present before the God whom he has offended. He claims no favor on the ground of right—because he has deserved it, or because of the dignity of his nature. Mercy, to his misery—mercy to him, though a sinner—mercy to him *as a sinner* is his plea. What could be

conceived more intensely humble, more utterly self-abased! In like manner, will godly sorrow ever humble those who are subject to its influence.

3. Godly sorrow prompts to a frank, an unreserved confession of sin. He, who is under its influence, disguises no part of the criminality of his offenses, either to himself or to the God against whom those offenses have been perpetrated. He seeks no extenuation, attempts no palliation of his sins. He finds for them no apology, in the corrupt tendencies of his own carnal nature, in the example of any number or description of his fellow-sinners or in the force of the temptations by which he was solicited to their commission. He stands as alone before God; and contemplates his sins in their intrinsic character. Hence, his confessions are unqualified, explicit and full; taking in the goodness, the justice and the purity of the law he has transgressed, the high and rightful authority he has insulted, the folly, iniquity and perverseness of his own character, in the perpetration of his offenses. "I have sinned!" "I have done wickedly!" "Against Thee—Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight!" Such are the outbursts of frank confession, with which the true penitent pleads to the charge which is brought against him by the Divine law. This confession is made, not to sinners like himself, but to the Pure and Holy Being, whom he has offended by his transgressions. It is true, that, under the emblematical Levitical system, which was intended as a "schoolmaster to bring us to Christ," confession was directed to be made before the Priest, who was to offer an atonement in behalf of the penitent; but, no such provision is to be found in the New Testament; as, under the Gospel dispensation there

is "no more offering for sin," nor any other Priest than He, "who has passed into the heavens, and is at the right-hand of God, there to appear before God for us." He is both the sacrifice and the Priest; and, before Him, with sole trust in His "sacrifice of Himself once for all," confession of sin is to be made unto God. Nothing could be more entirely gratuitous, nay more utterly at variance with the whole tenor of New Testament teaching than the claim of *priestly* authority in the Christian ministry; and, consequently, of the obligation of the laity to *auricular confession* to that ministry. Neither precept nor example can be found in the whole New Testament, for either the one or the other; and nothing could be more explicitly settled than that, under the Gospel dispensation, there is no other priest than He, who "needed not daily to offer for sins," but, who, "by one offering, hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." We consider auricular *private* confession, to the priest, as, at once, a most pernicious error, and the strongest prop of the system of errors to which it belongs. It holds the deluded votaries of that system in a moral bondage which cannot be equaled by any other found among men. It deludes men into a dependence, for help and salvation, on those in whom there is no help, no power to save; and it robs the Great High Priest, "who ever liveth, to make intercession for man," of one of the most sacred functions of His office. We scruple not to say that this provision would vitiate any system of Christian economy in which it should be admitted. Can any suppose that the injunction to Christians, to "confess their faults one to another, and pray one for another," is any authority for auricular confession to the priest? Who can fail to perceive that, according to this

precept, the priest is equally obliged to confess to his penitent, as the penitent is to confess to him? The duty of confession is clearly *reciprocal*, as is the intercession based upon it. The fact is, this requirement has no reference to the confession of sins in general, but of *social faults*; and, it proceeds on precisely the same principle as does the requirement, that we should confess our sins to God: *viz.*, that the offender owes it to the offended to confess *to him* the wrong which he has done him. This, genuine sorrow, for having offended, will always prompt the offender to do; and, this, sorrow for having sinned, will not fail to induce the penitent sinner to do.

4. Godly sorrow will *reformation of life*, wherever it is allowed to have its proper influence. Neglected duties will be performed with earnest diligence—the hitherto neglected Bible will be read, with a view to understand its teachings, its requirements, its warnings, and its invitations. It will be read, with a close application to the condition of the penitent himself. It will be read as an authoritative directory, by which the whole life is to be regulated. The instituted means of grace and ordinances of religion will no longer be neglected, nor attended upon with a view to social propriety merely, but that the word preached, the ordinances ministered, and the means used may be instrumental in the salvation of the soul, and in promoting the glory of God. Prayer, especially, will be a frequent, fervent and persevering exercise, of him, whose heart is moved by godly sorrow. He will not only join with others, whether in the Church or in the family circle, in offering up stated prayers; but, he will often retire into *secret*, with no eye of man upon him, no human ear to hear his supplication, and will there

pour out his earnest petitions into the ear of that God whom his iniquities have so grievously offended. The reformation of life, effected by godly sorrow, will extend far beyond a mere attention to the duties of religion. It will be seen in an entire abandonment of the courses of iniquity in which the penitent was formerly engaged. The profane will cease from his blasphemy—the licentious will renounce his debauchery—the unjust will cease to defraud or oppress his neighbor—and the violent man will no longer exercise cruelty over those in his power. The truly penitent will cease, carefully “cease to do evil,” to the utmost extent of his ability, and, at any cost or any sacrifice. The right hand will be cut off, the right eye will be plucked out—sins of pleasure, for profit or for ambition, will be abandoned. And, there will now be a diligent endeavor to “learn the way of righteousness”—to “learn to do well.” Ethics will now be studied, not merely as an interesting system of moral science, but as a supreme rule of life. The disposition of the penitent, in this respect, is clearly indicated by Saul of Tarsus, when he was brought, through conviction of his sinfulness, to experience godly sorrow. Convinced that Jesus was the Christ, and that he had been in rebellion against Him, he inquires, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” He “confers not with flesh and blood”—he “leans not to his own understanding,” liberally cultivated though it had been by the instructions of illustrious doctors of the law; but, with child-like simplicity and docility, looks up, for “instruction in righteousness,” to the Great Teacher Himself, ready to follow His guidance, ready to obey His orders. And, such is the disposition, wrought by godly sorrow, in the heart of every true penitent.

But, the reformation effected, in this stage of religious progress, however honestly and earnestly endeavored, will be found to be utterly inadequate to the sense of duty which is awakened in the conscience of the penitent. He will realize the experience of the same Saul of Tarsus, who said: "With my mind, I serve the law of God, but with my flesh, the law of sin—the good that I would, I do not, and the evil which I would not, that I do." Nay, he will be almost certain to feel that not only is his endeavor to reform abortive, but that his efforts to do so, only serve to entangle him the more in the meshes of the snare, in which he is taken captive, and to sink him the deeper, in the horrible pit of corruption, into which he had plunged himself. This estimate, of the result of his efforts, is not the true one. He feels thus, because he is more and more wakeful and sensible to his true moral state. The truth, however, is that his efforts are availing— are achieving a reformation of life—are preparing him for birth into a new life, by the power of the Spirit of all grace. He is, indeed, in the pangs of that birth, and the hour of his spiritual nativity is near at hand.

5. Godly sorrow prompts to *restitution* or *compensation*, in all the instances in which the sins of the penitent have wronged or injured any other being; and, to the utmost of his ability, the penitent will make such restitution or compensation. This is comparatively easy of accomplishment where the wrong to be compensated concerns the property or character of a fellow-creature. In the one case, if the penitent have the means, he can indemnify his wronged fellow-creature, by returning to him a full equivalent for the injury he had done to him—in the other, he can exonerate the character of his neighbor from

the false and injurious imputations or insinuations, by which he had calumniated his reputation. And, these things, the true penitent will do, at the sacrifice, if necessary, of all that he possesses, and however mortifying and humiliating it may be to him to acknowledge himself to have been the traducer and slanderer of his neighbor. Equally will he consider it his duty, and equally will he strive to heal the wounds which he has unrighteously inflicted, whether carelessly or through design, upon the sensibilities of a fellow-creature. He will not shrink from a frank acknowledgment, publicly or privately, of the injury so inflicted, nor to solicit the pardon of the offended or aggrieved party. But, when the wrong done has been in the leading of the innocent into crime, in debauching the moral principle, or in establishing habits of vice in a fellow-creature, how difficult, how impossible often, it will be found to undo the fatal mischief, to repair the incalculable injury so inflicted! Still: godly sorrow will induce a strenuous and persevering effort to accomplish a task of so transcendent importance. These efforts will often fail of success; and, when they do, what language can express the anguish of the penitent, when he sees the hopelessness of reclaiming to virtue a fellow-creature, whom he had betrayed into vice, whom he had initiated in the path of ruin! What reflection could be more bitter, more soul-piercing than that of having been the agent in debauching an immortal spirit, and entering it upon a course that is leading it down to eternal woe? How rings the death-wail of that soul, in the tortured ear of the penitent, hopeless of reclaiming it from that course of ruin into which he was its leader! The anticipated groans of the horrible pit, rising in complaints against him,

for having betrayed that soul to damnation, wring his soul with agony. Ah! it is a fearful thing to poison souls with vice—to open to them the gates of eternal perdition! Thus, the penitent, however honestly and diligently he may strive to do so, may often fail of making compensation for the wrong he has done to his fellow-creatures by his sins. But, when he feels the obligation to render such compensation to God, for the wrong done to Him by sin, he is instantly aware that he has no power to do *anything* of the kind. His language is, “I have sinned! What shall I do unto Thee, O, Thou Preserver of men? Moral virtue is my simple duty, and its most exact performance can, therefore, compensate for no wrong heretofore committed against Thee! Worship, pure and devout as that offered by the hosts of heaven, would not exceed Thy just due; and, therefore, it could be no compensation to Thee for my wrongs toward Thee! All I am, all I have, all I can do, are due to Thee; and, consequently, from none of these can I offer Thee any compensation for the wrongs done Thee by my sins!” Such is the hopeless conviction of the penitent, with relation to his rendering to God the compensation due to Him, for the wrong perpetrated against Him by sin. *Self-despair* is the final result of the operations of godly sorrow—is the consummation of repentance towards God.

We have ascribed repentance to the operation of godly sorrow alone; not that this is the only emotion in the mind of the true penitent. It is far from being the only one:—far from being the only allowable, truly evangelical emotion that operates there. Self-love, when subordinate to the love and the service of God, is not only innocent but laudable. It was planted in the human soul, by an

infinitely wise Creator, for very important purposes. It was appealed to, while man was yet in a state of innocence and rectitude, as of high conservative capability and tendency. It was appealed to, as a guarantee to the claims of the law of probation. Why, else, is the announcement made, to the first human pair, that *in the day they should eat of the interdicted fruit, they should surely die?* To the penitent, convinced of sin, in how many forms is self-love rendered a source of the most painful emotions! He beholds himself degraded, from the proper dignity of a moral being, into a slave of sin—how inexpressibly humiliating! The favor and the peace of God, without which tranquillity and assured safety are utterly impracticable, have been alienated by his sin—how unspeakably disquieting! Heaven, with all its joys and all its glories, have been forfeited by transgression—how deeply to be regretted and deplored! Hell, with all its pains and horrors, deserved, threatened moving from beneath to meet the sinner at his coming—how alarming! How terrible! Degraded, enslaved, disquieted, heaven lost and hell in imminent prospect, what wonder that the penitent exclaims: “What must I do to be saved?” “O, wretched man, that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” “God be merciful to me, a sinner!” “Lord save, or I perish!” “Oh, that I knew where I might find Him! that I might come even to His seat. I would order my cause before Him. I would fill my mouth with arguments.” There is no sorrow more overwhelming; no anguish more piercing; no agony more racking to the soul, than that which the awakened sinner experiences, when contemplating the complicated evils which he has brought upon himself, by the sins of which

his conscience convicts him. He loathes and abhors himself, for his degradation and defilement—the law of God thunders its curses in his ear—the purity, the justice and the majesty, the truth, the wisdom and the power, the omnipresence, the eternity and even the goodness of God are seen marshalled, in terrible array, against him, for his rebellion and his ingratitude. Heavenly joys, for which he was created, and, in absence of which, existence will be an eternal calamity, has been bartered off for the evanescent and unsatisfying pleasures of sin; and hell, with its undying worm, its unquenchable fire, unutterable groans—hell, prepared, not for man, but for the Devil and his angels, awaits him, to swallow him up, in fathomless, interminable perdition. Above all, and, indeed, inferring all the rest, he sees written, with lurid characters, in the book of doom, “Banishment from God! Destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of His power!” This is, indeed, a “wretched state of deep despair”—a destiny of unutterable woe! Well may the awakened sinner struggle and agonize for deliverance from such painful circumstances—such a horrible doom! Well may he cry mightily to God for help and salvation! And, thus will the penitent sinner ever be affected; notwithstanding this *self-directed* sorrow belongs not to true repentance, nor produces repentance towards God. He will be thus affected, because the same conviction of sin which excites godly sorrow, exhibits to him the wretchedness of his condition, and the fearful destiny which awaits him, as the punishment of the sins, by which he has offended God, and for which he “sorrows after a godly sort.” While, therefore, he evangelically repents towards God, *for his sins*, he earnestly seeks deliverance from the

horrible doom to which they have consigned him. Seeking this deliverance, and repentance are entirely distinct in their nature, and in the emotions from which they spring; nevertheless, wherever the *latter* is found, the *former* is certain to be found also—one having regard to God and His slighted, resisted claims—the other, to the fearful consequences incurred by slighting and resisting those claims, and thereby offending God, and rendering Him an enemy. We shall,

III. Attempt to ascertain the purposes to be accomplished by this repentance, in the economy of salvation. We think there are two purposes to be accomplished by repentance, both of great importance in the economy of salvation; 'To induce, in the mind of the sinner, a firm and decided persuasion that he cannot, by the utmost and the best-directed exertion of his own proper capabilities, achieve his own salvation—and, to prepare him to embrace the terms on which alone God has proffered salvation to offending mankind.' We have, to some extent, and, we think, unavoidably, anticipated what we have to say in regard to both these purposes. Nevertheless, we deem it proper to consider them more particularly; and,

1. It is the purpose of repentance toward God *to induce, in the mind of the sinner, a firm and decided persuasion that he cannot, by the utmost and the best-directed exertion of his own proper capabilities, achieve his own salvation.* The natural man has too little concern about his salvation to give himself much trouble in ascertaining by what means it is to be secured. Either he deems himself, as did Saul of Tarsus, already in a state of safety—"alive;" or, he imagines that, at any time, when he shall think it necessary, he can turn from his evil courses, and win the

Divine favor, by penitence and prayer. But, when "the commandment"—the law of God—"comes,"—is manifested to his understanding and conscience, in its purity, its breadth of requirement, its inflexibility, its tremendous sanctions and its infinite authority; and, when he sees himself, in the light of that law, a mass of loathsome defilement, a manifold transgressor, exposed to the curse of the law, and guilty of rebellion against the infinite Sovereign, he finds that he is "dead in trespasses and sins." And, it now becomes with him a question of deepest interest, *how* he may be saved. He clings to the persuasion he has long entertained, that, through the mercy of God, and the merits of Christ, he can save himself by *repentance*. And, he engages in the work, with a sincerity and an earnestness corresponding to the depth of his sorrow for having offended God, and to the magnitude of the peril in which he finds himself involved. He cultivates, under the promptings of godly sorrow, an utter hatred for sin, in every form of beauty, of advantage or of distinction, in which it solicits his regard. He is utterly abased in his own eyes, on account of the loathsome impurity and degradation in which sin has involved his whole moral being. His heart pours forth a frank, full, unextenuated confession of his rebellion and ingratitude. He labors diligently, carefully and with earnest solicitude to reform all that is amiss, in his affections, his tempers, his conversation, his conduct, in short, in all his habits of life; and, to the full extent of his ability, he renders a compensation for all the wrongs his sins have done to others. This repentance, Scriptural in its producing influence and in its character, he had fondly hoped would

secure his salvation. His experience *now* shows him that this hope was not well-founded—guilt still lies heavy upon his conscience. Still, he feels himself to be a slave of sin, and under the curse of the violated law, which *will* exact on him its fearful penalty, unless indemnified by an adequate compensation for the wrong done to the Divine authority, and, through that, to the whole moral universe, by his sins. What wonder, then, if the repentant sinner exclaims, in the despair occasioned by this failure of repentance to secure to him the salvation he had hoped from it: "What shall I do?" "Is the mercy of God clean gone?" "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath He, in anger, shut up His tender mercies?" Here, *self-despair* seizes upon his soul, and he yields to the humiliating conviction, that, if he is ever saved, it must be by a process in which he can have no other participation than that of the pauper—the mere receiving of salvation on such terms as the Giver of that salvation shall have prescribed.

2. Repentance towards God *prepares the penitent sinner to embrace the terms on which alone God has proffered salvation to offending mankind.* He is thus prepared by his hatred for sin, and his consequent earnest desire to be delivered from its detested dominion—by his humiliation, which presumes not to stipulate terms with God, or to question those which He has seen proper to prescribe—by that habit of subjection to the will of God, in which he has been trained by the rigorous discipline of repentance—by despair of working out his own salvation, by any process of his own devising, or within the scope of his own capabilities—and by the urgent need of salvation, revealed to him in the conviction of sin, in which his

repentance originated, and from which that repentance has, all along, derived its vitality and vigor. Cut off from all dependence on his own best performances, by the experience his repentance has afforded him, and urged on by his agonizing sense of his need of salvation, the penitent is now prepared to embrace God's terms of saving sinners, through FAITH IN CHRIST.

DISCOURSE XVI.

SALVATION BY FAITH IN CHRIST JESUS.

Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.—Acts xvi, 31.

OUR text is an answer to the inquiry of the alarmed and penitent Jailer, at Philippi, when he had witnessed the manifest interposition of Divine power, in behalf of Paul and Silas, whom the magistrates, after having laid many stripes upon them, had committed to prison, under his custody, with a charge that he should keep them safely; and, whom he had, accordingly, incarcerated in the *inner* prison, and fastened in the stocks by their feet, that he might render their escape impossible. At midnight, these bruised and mangled prisoners, in the gloom of their dungeon, and under the painful constraint to which they were subjected by being fastened in the stocks, “prayed and sung praises to God” so loud that the other “prisoners heard them.” The devout exercises of these imprisoned ministers of Christ, called into operation an agency capable of baffling all the rigorous precautions of the Jailer, to carry into effect the mandate of his superiors, for the safe-keeping of these prisoners. Without any of those premonitory indications, which usually herald the approach of such phenomena, “sud-

denly, there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken—the prison-doors were opened, and every one's bands loosed." Awaking from sleep, and seeing the condition of the prison, the Jailer naturally concluded that the prisoners had all escaped; and, being, doubtless, responsible with his life for the safe-keeping of those committed to his custody, he was in the act of escaping the disgrace of a public execution, by the short method by which it was a frequent custom with the Romans to terminate their fears and their calamities. He had drawn his sword, and was about to plunge it into his own bosom, when his rash hand was stayed, by a voice from the inner prison, earnestly entreating the desperate man to spare himself, and assuring him that the danger he apprehended did not exist; as all the prisoners were still in his power. He had, doubtless, heard for what cause Paul and Silas had been beaten and committed to prison—for preaching Christ, as the Saviour of men. He knew the severities which, for this, had been inflicted on them, by himself as well as by others. How vastly superior to any magnanimity or kindness with which he was acquainted, were those of these men, who, not only voluntarily remained in prison, when a way was opened for their escape, but perpetuated their vile durance, rather than see him, who had been so cruel to them, place himself beyond the power of doing them further injury, by destroying his own life! Connecting this with the manner in which their prison-doors were opened and their fetters removed, was it not natural for him to adopt the conclusion that the message which these men had proclaimed, at so much risk, was the truth, and under the patronage of the Supreme Ruler of the universe, who alone could have produced the

earthquake and its accompanying wonders, in the opening of the prison-doors, and in the loosening of the prisoners' bonds ? This persuasion would, at once, lead him to investigate his own need of the salvation proposed in that message. And, he must be indeed blind and stupid, who, when his attention is seriously fixed upon his own moral condition, does not see that it is deplorable, and his state dangerous in the extreme. Hence, it was perfectly natural that the Jailer, aroused and convinced, as we have supposed him to be, should promptly and earnestly seek to discover by what way he might escape from his present moral inthralldom and guilt, and avoid the danger which lowered over him, in the eternal future of his destiny. And, who, it would be natural for him to reflect, could be so well qualified to instruct him, in this matter as the messengers of God, whose great and accredited business it was to "bring men to the knowledge of salvation ?" He, accordingly, when arrested in his mad purpose of self-destruction, by the kindly voice of his cruelly-used prisoners, "called for a light—sprang in, to where his prisoners were endungeoned—came before them trembling—fell down before them—brought them out," (probably into the public room of the prison,) "and said, 'Sirs ! what must I do to be saved ?'" The interpretation which some have given of this question, *viz* : That the Jailer wished to know how he might be saved from the danger to which he was exposed, on account of what had occurred in the prison, during the night, is palpably absurd. He could not now suppose himself in any danger on this account: for, his prisoners were all safe in his custody. Besides, had there been any such danger, his prisoners could not have been supposed capable of directing him how to

escape it. And, finally, the answer they returned to him would have had no pertinency to the question to which it was responded. For, of what avail could *believing on the Lord Jesus Christ* have been to him, in relation to danger, *of the kind supposed in this interpretation?* It might have enhanced such a danger—it could not have *saved* him from it. Either Paul and Silas trifled with the Jailer's anxiety most cruelly, or the necessity, which elicited his eager inquiry, was of the kind we have supposed it to be—a necessity arising from the sinfulness and the guilt of which he was now convicted by his own conscience.

For salvation from sin, its guilt and its consequences, there is but one provision known to the Gospel—that provision is the merits of Christ, in its atoning efficacy, and in its application, to individual necessity, by the Spirit and grace of God; and, where the Gospel message has been published, there is, as we intimated in our *last Discourse*, but one condition, upon compliance with which the personal transgressor can secure an interest in that provision, so as to obtain the salvation of his soul—that condition is *faith in Christ*. Salvation from sin, by faith in Christ, will form the important subject of our meditation in the present Discourse. This subject consists of two parts—both of them deeply interesting to all who have “sinned and come short of the glory of God”—in other words, to all men. These parts of the subject are,

I. Salvation from sin ; and

II. Faith in Christ is the only condition of this salvation, in the case of Gospel-taught sinners.

III. We shall notice some of the principal effects of salvation from sin, by faith in Christ.

I. The first part of our subject is *salvation from sin*.

Salvation means the same thing as *deliverance* and *preservation*. We are saved from calamity, when we are delivered from it—we are saved from danger, when we are preserved from its befalling us. To be saved from sin, not only implies deliverance from it, as a moral state, and from the guilt which it has brought upon us, but also a preservation from the danger to which it has rendered us liable. We shall consider salvation from sin according to this complex view of it; but, in doing so, we shall separate it into its several parts, and treat of each distinctly.

Sin supposes moral agency, moral obligation, moral law and a transgression of that law. A moral law can be as effectually transgressed by an allowed state of the affections, as by the most flagrant act; and guilt follows upon the former as certainly as upon the latter. That man is a moral agent, and subject to moral obligation, we have had frequent occasions, in previous Discourses, of attempting to show. We should, therefore, deem it wholly superfluous to dwell upon these positions in this place. That man is under the requirements of moral law, most persons will readily agree, and the Holy Scriptures place the matter out of all question, by their teachings on the subject. Throughout the whole Sacred Volume, God is represented as the Supreme Ruler of man; and as having given him a law for his government—written out clearly, in His word of Revelation, or inscribed, less distinctly, but with clearness enough to leave its transgressors without excuse, in the hearts of those who have not been favored with that Word. This law is eminently moral in its character, addressing itself chiefly to the moral faculties of man, regulating his affections and passions, and aiming

especially at the formation of individual character, rather than the conservation of social interests. The *spirit* or *genius* of this law is *LOVE*; and the *direction* and *measure* of this affection, together with its obligation, are the *sum* of that law. “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength; and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself—upon these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.” To love God with all our faculties, and to love our neighbor—every man—as we love ourselves, and to act in accordance with the tendency of these affections, embrace the whole scope of the Divine law, in its requirements upon man. Now, a breach of this law, in any point, and during no matter how short a time, is sin against God, and, consequently, incurs guilt.

1. By being saved from sin, we understand being delivered from sin, *as a moral state*. In this is included salvation from sin, in the dominion it exerts over action, and in the bias of the affections to that which is sinful. Salvation from sin embraces deliverance from both these. This deliverance is usually characterized as *conversion* and *sanctification*—the former rectifying the *will*, and, consequently, the habits of life—the latter purifying the affections and giving to them a uniformly right direction. Unless both these changes pass upon man, he cannot, with any propriety, be regarded as saved from sin. No one, surely, will contend that he, who is still under the dominion of sin, is saved from it. As little propriety, we conceive, would there be in considering him saved from sin, whose affections and passions are tainted and biased by its influence. All, we think, who consider salvation

from sin anything more than a mere submission to religious ceremonials, deem of it, when complete, as an entire deliverance from not only the power of sin over the life, but from its existence—even its latent existence in the soul. Those who appear before the throne in heaven, must, as all allow, appear in “robes white and clean”—“without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” Even those who believe that man cannot be saved from sin while he continues in this life, still allow that, ere he can enter heaven, he must be *so* saved; and ascribe the consummation of his salvation to some unrevealed, some unimaginable influence of death on his moral state, or to the purifying flames of a purgatory, that has been dreamed into existence by metaphysical speculation, or contrived by ambition and cupidity, for the purposes of gaining dominion over man, by means of his tenderest sensibilities and most sacred instincts, and of extorting from him large fees for services pretended to be rendered to departed relatives, by the priest. We think it probable that the absurdity of ascribing any soul-saving influence to death, or of limiting almighty grace to the hour of death for the completion of salvation, led some, who credited the *necessary* existence of sin in man during his whole life, to adopt the figment of purgatorial fire, intermediate between life and heaven. Be this as it may, the doctrine of entire deliverance from sin, as a moral state, is included in the idea of perfected salvation entertained by these as well as in that entertained by those who believe that salvation is of God, and may be accomplished by Him as effectually forty years before death, as at the consummation of that change, or by any purgatorial fires that could be kindled, even by the breath of the Almighty Himself.

2. Salvation from sin includes deliverance from the guilt of sins previously committed. A sense of guilt produces remorse—the most painful emotion that can arise in a human bosom. It combines in itself the most soul-harrowing self-reproach, a consciousness of the Divine displeasure and frightfully alarming apprehensions of wrath, forever coming, as the just punishment of sin.

Salvation from sin includes the removal of this most painful emotion, by deliverance from guilt, a sense of which has excited it. This deliverance is indispensable to the well-being of the sinner; for, so long as he is the subject of guilt, he must be under the curse of God, as the righteous Ruler of the moral world. “The wrath of God abideth on him,” who lies under the guilt of transgressing the moral law, and of thus violating the sacred obligation he is under to the infinite Being, to whom he is responsible for his moral state and character. To such a one there can be no rational enjoyment of existence. The only refuge of such is in the wild hurry of distracting excitement, or in blockish stupidity and thoughtlessness,—neither of which is compatible with rational enjoyment. To the wakeful and considerate, who dare to look at their condition steadily, guilt covers the past with infamy, fills the present with anguish and overclouds the future with gloom and horror. Salvation from sin removes all these complicated evils, by removing the guilt in which they have their origin. This is the taking off of a crushing weight from the conscience—this is the extracting of the fiery dart, which was rankling in the heart, and whose poison was drinking up the spirits—this is the pouring of balm into the bleeding and bruised soul, to soothe its anguish and to heal its wounds—this is a coming out of

the darkness of condemnation, into the marvelous light of God's favor—this is the scattering of the clouds of coming wrath, which loomed up, with portentous gloom, in the eternal future. How important, then, is deliverance from the guilt of sin! No language can express its value. No human mind can estimate its importance. Only those, who are conversant with the secrets of the horrible pit, from which it preserves the sinner, and with the joys of heaven, to which it opens the way to the sinner, could adequately conceive how dependent is his happiness on the removal of his guilt.

3. Salvation from sin, as a moral state, is preservation from the danger to which sin exposes man.

(1.) The indulgence of sinful dispositions exposes him, who allows himself in that indulgence, to imminent danger of running up an accumulated account against himself with Divine Justice, and of, thereby, "heaping up wrath, against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." Man, having entered upon any course, especially a vicious one, pursues it with constantly accelerated progress, as use and habit come in aid of choice and determination. Hence, he, in whom sin, as a moral state, is prevalent, experiences, every day he continues in that state, a constantly increasing facility in sinning. What was, to him, once so revolting as to be morally impossible, has now become so easy as to seem the result of constitutional tendency. The circle of his abominations is continually widening—taking in one position of antagonism to God after another, till the whole field of his moral operations is one vast and hideous scene of rebellion against the government of God. The stream of his moral corruption, at first a timid rill, that hid itself

amid reeds and flowers, has gone on increasing, in its progress, by one accession after another, till it has become deep, wide and of so forceful a current as to sweep before it every obstacle that is interposed, either by human purpose or by the grace of God. At no point, in his downward progress, can the sinner become stationary. He must recede or go forward. He must be saved from sin, or he will and must go on, to add sin to his sin. How afflicting and alarming is this view of the condition of the sinner! Every moment, he is widening the distance between himself and God! Every moment, he is augmenting the terrible claims of Divine Justice against himself! Nay, more: every moment, the speed, with which he departs from God, is increased, and the rapidity with which wrath accumulates against him is accelerated! Salvation from sin, as a moral state, at any point in this downward course, cuts off this fatal progress. And, it not only ends this fearful progress, but it also initiates the sinner in a counter progress, the tendency of which is to everlasting life, at the right hand of God. Thus, the sinner, in being saved from sin, is also saved from the rapidly descending course of trnsgression, which, till he was thus saved, lay stretched out before him, and along which he was drawn onward with a still increasing attraction.

(2.) Salvation from sin is preservation from the legal consequences of the sin which has been perpetrated. The heart being delivered from its corrupt state and its rebellious tendencies, and the guilt of former trangressions being removed, "the fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries," is, consequently, removed; and the sinner is, therefore, pre-

served from that disquiet and perturbation, which, like the agitation of the sea, allows of no rest, no peace to the soul; and, especially is he preserved from the unutterable terrors which death awakens in the bosom of the sinner, conscious of his sins, and having a just appreciation of the enormity of his guilt. This disquiet and perturbation, and these terrors of anticipated death, are ingredients in the most delicious cup of life, which are sufficiently noxious to destroy its power of imparting happiness—nay, to communicate to it the bitterness of death. Hence, the truth of the aphorism, which has been deemed *axiomatic* in its character, that “No wicked man is happy.” Axiomatic or not, the truth of the aphorism is established by the testimony of all experience, in all ages and in all the varied circumstances in which that experience has been acquired. No amount of wealth—no ministrations of pleasure—no gratification of ambition have been able to calm the disturbed bosom of the sinner, or to satisfy the cravings of an immortal spirit, cut off by sin from communion with God, and, by the same fell influence, thrown, helpless and defenseless, within the sweep of Divine wrath. Salvation from sin alone can remove these insuperable hindrances to human happiness, and restore to the sinner the possibility of regaining that lost treasure, for the enjoyment of which he was intended and properly constituted in his creation.

(3.) There awaits the sinner, dying in that state, a destiny of woe, of which the whole sum of the discomforts sin inflicts upon man in this life is scarcely an appreciable foretaste. The present life of man is a state of mixed condition, a probationary state, in which, not the reward of sin, but its effects merely are experienced by

the sinner; and, these effects are so mixed up with and qualified by the influence of surrounding circumstances, that, very often, the sinner is hardly aware of their existence, and never is able to realize the full extent of their deleterious character. The *future* will be a state of rewards for the deeds of this life; and will, therefore, be characterized by the nature of the rewards assigned, whether for weal or woe. The future of sinners will be a state of unmixed evil—of unqualified wretchedness; for, it will be a state of *punishment for sin against God*. There will enter into the gloom of its darkness, not one ray of light: no whisper of consolation, no drop of comfort will soothe the anguish of soul which will be an abundant ingredient in their cup of sorrow. “Their worm shall never die—the fire shall never be quenched,” in which they are to be punished—not purified—“destroyed with everlasting destruction,” not disciplined for eternal blessedness. In the society of impure and malignant spirits; under the wrath and curse of that God, against whom they devoted their term of probation to rebellion and ingratitude, and with the stern voice of conscience, now sleepless as the eye of God, and honest as truth itself, forever thundering in their ears—“Ye knew your duty, and ye did it not!”—thus must lie the miserable sinner, in the lapse of ever-recurring years, while eternity rolls on its ceaseless current. What heart so stout as can brook the prospect of such a fearful doom as is here faintly indicated! And, yet, such, but ineffably more dreadful, is the doom of every child of man, who dies unsaved from sin. Salvation from sin preserves the sinner from this horrible doom; as it removes the cause by which man is disqualified for the service and enjoyment

of God, and as it removes the guilt to which this doom is awarded by the justice of the righteous Sovereign. These causes of banishment from God, and the punishment of the banished sinner, being removed by salvation from sin, he, who is thus saved, is, at the moment of such salvation, and while he shall continue a subject of it, secured from a participation in the fearful punishment that is due to sin. A contrary supposition would charge God with injustice—with an injustice equal to that which He would exhibit, in consigning one who had always been innocent to the punishment due alone to sin; for, salvation from sin places the sinner in the same relation to the sanctions of the Divine law as that which he would have occupied, if he had never transgressed that law. How unutterably important this salvation! It can be rightly imagined only in view of the horrible pit, whose gloomy gates it closes against the sinner's entrance into it, and in view of that eternal felicity to which, through this salvation, he may, at last, attain.

(4.) Salvation from sin, is a daily, hourly, constant preservation from the danger of returning under the bondage and into the corruption of sin, as a moral state; of bringing new guilt upon the soul, and of incurring all the fearful consequences of such apostasy. That such a danger is not, *in the nature of things*, inconsistent with any measure of deliverance from sin, though it should be absolutely perfect, is evident from the facts that pure and upright angels “kept not their first estate,” but sinned and are now “reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day;” and that Adam, “made in the image of God,” holy, just and good, became a transgressor of the law; and, by his sin, involved

himself and his whole race in guilt and ruin. Nor, we do not hesitate to affirm, is there any guarantee, in the plan of salvation, for the perseverance of one who has been saved from sin, in the way of righteousness, and, consequently, in the way of salvation. On the contrary, the Scriptures of truth, among their clearest revelations, urge upon our attention, not the possibility merely, but the great danger there is that those who have begun to "run well," should be "hindered," "draw back" and lose the favor of God. To this purpose, we have, in the Sacred Volume, striking examples, solemn and oft-repeated warnings, earnest and impressive admonitions and tender and urgent exhortations—all implying the danger in question. Salvation from sin is, we repeat, continual preservation from apostasy. Were we left dependent on ourselves alone, there is, probably, not one of Adam's degenerate race, no matter what his attainments in piety, that would stand fast by his allegiance to God for even a single moment. Every moment, will be needed grace to "preserve them unblamable in holiness," and continue them in a state of justification and acceptance with God. Salvation from sin, to be complete and final, requires this preservation to the end of life.

We have seen that salvation from sin is a *deliverance* from sin, both as it regards its dominion over action, and as it is a corruption or perversion of moral nature—a *deliverance* from the guilt of sins already perpetrated—a *preservation* from increasing the activity and facility of the sinner, in his course of rebellion, and, consequently, from augmenting the amount of his guilt and the severity of his punishment as a sinner—from the legal consequences of sin, both in time and eternity, and from the danger of

falling back into sin, into guilt and under the curse of the law. We are now,

II. To consider the second part of our subject, *viz.*, that *faith in Christ is the only condition of this salvation, in the case of all Gospel-taught sinners.*

We thus specify those to whose salvation, a compliance with this condition is indispensable, because the Holy Scriptures authorize the assertion, that "in every nation, he that feareth God and worketh righteousness, is accepted of Him," and, consequently, are saved from sin. Now, if there were no cases, in which men who are without Gospel instruction, and, consequently, incapable of faith in Christ, who do fear God, work righteousness and are accepted of Him, and, therefore, saved, this declaration of Holy Writ, would be egregious trifling. The whole tenor of New-Testament instruction goes to establish, beyond successful controversy, these two important positions—that he, who, in the diligent use of the means providentially afforded him, serves God with purpose of heart and with persevering fidelity, will be saved, through the merits of Christ's atoning sacrifice, and his availing intercession, and by the influence of the Holy Spirit—and, that, where the Gospel is published, men can be saved only on condition of faith in those merits and that intercession. As our Discourse is to those favored with Gospel instruction, we deem it needless to dwell at greater length upon *exceptional* instances of salvation; and shall, accordingly, confine our further remarks to the *condition*, on which *alone* salvation is offered to man in *that* instruction.

1. Our first attempt will be to ascertain the nature of the *faith* in question. It is, by one scripture, represented to be *the believing of the testimony which God hath given*

of His Son—that is, *that eternal life is to come to man through His Son*. There can be no faith without a belief of the proposition which is the subject-matter of that faith. But, is a mere belief in the truth of the proposition or propositions, of which faith is predicated, the faith required in order to salvation? We think there is, in a portion of Scripture we are about to cite, a clear intimation that it is not. That scripture informs us that it is “with the heart man believeth unto righteousness.” Now, we know, every Bible-reader, and, indeed, every man who understands common language, must know that the intellectual faculties, by which the act of mere believing is performed, are never indicated by the term *heart*, but that the *affections* are very often indicated by it. Not only must the intellectual faculties recognize the truth of the propositions involved in the testimony to be received; but, especially must the affections rally to those propositions, and be appropriately influenced by them. Those propositions must be approved, not only as true, but as fit and right, by the intellect; and they must also be embraced by the affections, as worthy of regard, in proportion to the importance of their relation to the honor of God and the well-being of man. And, particularly must *trust* and *confidence* be reposed in the pledges they tender to man. Whatever they promise to man must be relied on, not as possible or even as true, in general merely, but as certain to be accomplished in the case of every individual, at the very moment he sustains the relation contemplated in the promise. Thus: if it be promised that “whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord, shall be saved,” the faithfulness of the promise must be relied on, and salvation expected to follow *immediately* upon calling upon the

name of the Lord, as the fulfillment of that promise. It is not enough to believe that calling upon the name of the Lord is necessary in order to salvation, or that salvation will, *sometime*, follow upon calling on the name of the Lord; but, the fulfillment of the promise must be expected to follow *at once*, upon compliance with the condition. Nothing short of this, answers to the faith of the Gospel. That faith is *taking God at His word*—is unquestioning, unhesitating reliance upon His truth and His fidelity.

2. We consider the subject-matter of faith. It is, that, *by offering Himself an atoning sacrifice for mankind, Christ has made provision for their salvation from sin*. In this provision is included the expiation of original guilt, restored probation, moral power, the regenerating, quickening, enlightening, converting and sanctifying influences of the Holy Ghost—the pardon of sins, upon compliance with the condition on which pardon is offered—the attestation of that pardon and of the adoption, as a child of God, which always accompanies pardon—protection against the wiles of the Devil and every other temptation, from whatever quarter it may come, so as that the sinner, saved by grace, is not permitted to be “tempted above that he is able.” Faith, moreover, embraces, within its scope, the advocacy and intercession of Christ; in which He secures the offer of this ample provision for salvation to every sinner, and its effectiveness in the case of every one who accepts the offer. Christ is the center object in the view of faith—the source and fountain whence proceed all the streams of this saving provision. Hence, to believe in Christ, is to accredit and rely upon the offer of salvation made in the Gospel—to trust in the adequacy and efficiency of the provision made for its accomplishment.

—and to trace all these streams of saving influence to Christ as their source. Christ, then, in His atoning merits, in the provision he has made for the salvation of man, and in His constant administration of that provision, by His advocacy and intercession for man, before the presence of offended Majesty, is the subject-matter of saving faith. By faith, the sinner casts himself, with exclusive and unquestioning confidence, on the merits of Christ's atonement—the sufficiency of the provision made by HIm, for the salvation of man—and the efficacy of His advocacy and intercession, for salvation from sin. *Note this*: The sinner, in the exercise of saving faith, exercises this trust for *personal* and *immediate* salvation. Barren *generalities*, in believing, will not secure salvation. Nor, will it avail to make the matter *personal*, unless the trust is *instant*, as well as *exclusive*—claiming instant, personal salvation from sin, as the result of trust in the truth and faithfulness of God, and in the sufficiency of merit and adequacy of provision for salvation in Christ.

3. An inquiry, of much interest, ought not to be left unnoticed in this Discourse, viz: 'Is faith the *gift of God*, or is it the *act of the sinner*, who is saved by its instrumentality?' We think there can be no rational question that faith is the *act of the sinner*. It is required as *his act*, by every command, exhortation and invitation of the Gospel, to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ; and the want of faith is set forth as the chief ground of condemnation and perdition to those who finally perish. Now, were not faith the act of the sinner, all this would be absurd, tantalizing and unjust. To require man to do what is not within the scope of his capability of performing, and to condemn him for not doing what is *so* required, carry upon

their very face, the characters of absurdity and cruel injustice. Still, we do not hesitate to affirm that faith is the *gift of God*—the gift of God, too, in a sense different from and greatly superior to one we have not unfrequently heard assigned to it, viz: ‘That God gave the faculties to be exercised in faith—the truth, to be believed and the evidences, by which that truth is established.’ All this is true; but, we think, all this is but a part of the truth in the matter. The power, or faculties, exercised in the act of faith, were perverted and enfeebled by the influence of the original transgression—these faculties are reinvigorated and rectified, by the gracious influence of the Divine Spirit—the medium, through which moral and religious truth are presented to the mind of man was disturbed, distorted and darkened, by the influence of the Fall—this hindrance, to the exercise of faith, is removed, by the same Spirit of all grace. In short, the power to believe, the truth to be believed, and the evidences supporting that truth, are all of grace; and, therefore, the faith which is exercised, by these Divinely restored faculties, in the truth Divinely revealed, on the authority of the testimony Divinely afforded must be regarded as being, in a peculiar sense, the *gift of God*. That it is so, is evident from the prayer of the apostles: “Lord, *increase our faith!*” and from the agency ascribed to Him, in the origination and completion of this important act of the saved, when He is represented as the “*author and finisher* of their faith.” We say nothing of *Ephesians* ii, 8: “By grace ye are saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God;” as we doubt of faith being that which is here declared to be the gift of God. We incline to the opinion that the *gift of God* is predicated of the *whole*

process, embracing the agency—*grace*—the instrumentality or medium, *faith*—and the achievement, *salvation*. All this is of the mercy of God in Christ. The whole operation, including all its appliances, is the *gift of God* in Christ. Be this as it may, it appears to us that faith is the *gift of God*, in a manner not to supersede the moral agency of man in its exercise; and the *act of the sinner*, in such a way as that he is not independent, in its performance, of the grace of God.

4. We shall, finally, consider the *rationale* of salvation from sin, by faith in Christ. Faith, considered in its direct moral force, would be utterly inadequate to the achievement of man's salvation. Somewhat, tending to salvation, it may be supposed capable of accomplishing, in the exertion of that force. It may, and nothing else, perhaps, can so effectually excite penitence, as a realizing view, by faith, of the agonies of the Saviour on the Cross, when He expiated the sin of mankind, by offering Himself an atoning sacrifice for that sin. Again: what can beget such a sense of gratitude, as faith, when it reveals to man that love wherewith God loved us, when “He gave His Only-begotten Son, to be a propitiation for our sins?” The proper, rational effect, *moral* effect, we mean, of the view which faith presents of this wondrous love, is to excite love to God. How could it be otherwise than that those who have entertained this view, should feel as St. John felt, when he said: “We love Him, because He first loved us?” But, allowing all that can be reasonably claimed for the efficiency of faith, as a moral operative, it must come far short of effecting our salvation. And, if faith be the instrument of our salvation, it must be so, by putting in motion an agency beyond the scope of its own

moral operation. This it does. By the ordination and appointment of God, faith is rendered the connecting medium, between the sinner and the merits of Christ's atoning sacrifice and His efficacious and unceasing advocacy and intercession. Faith is thus rendered a negotiable Draft, upon the Treasury of Heaven, to the full amount of all that is necessary in order to salvation. By virtue of it are obtained those influences and operations of the Holy Ghost, by which man is "created in Christ Jesus unto good works;" by which he is made "a new creature;" by which he is "purified from all iniquity," "cleansed from all unrighteousness;" by which he is "made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." Faith appropriates the merits of Christ's sacrificial death to the sinner; so as that God can "be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus." Faith secures, to the justified and regenerated sinner, that constant supply of grace, whereby he is enabled to "serve God with reverence and godly fear"—to "keep himself in the love of God"—to "be faithful unto death," and, consequently, to "finish his course with joy." Faith is the "shield, whereby every fiery dart of the wicked shall be quenched"—"the victory that overcometh the world." He that "keepeth the faith" to the end, is "kept by the power of God, through" that "faith unto salvation." Faith, then, secures the influences of the Holy Spirit, necessary to a change of heart—a new birth—the sanctification of the Spirit and "continuance in well-doing"—appropriates the merits of the atonement, made by Jesus Christ, to the believer's justification before God—and arms him with the power of God Himself, so far as the exigencies of his salvation require its exertion. The efficacy of faith, in the salvation

of man, lies chiefly in its subject-matter; and not in its intrinsic moral force. It is the arm of God, made bare and put in motion by faith, that achieves the salvation of man; and, who can doubt the efficiency of this Agent? Or, who will dispute the *fitness* of the requirement that God shall be trusted, for the salvation which he proposes to man, and which He, and He *only* can accomplish? Nay, could he reasonably abate this requirement? Would there not be a palpable absurdity in supposing that God would save a sinner, whom he could not inspire with confidence in His ability and willingness to save, and in the truth and fidelity of His promises?

III. *We shall notice some of the principal effects of salvation, by faith in Christ.*

1. Salvation from sin, as it is deliverance from the dominion of sin, and from corrupt moral tendencies, renders the individual, thus saved, free to adopt a new and an upright course of life. "The Son, having made him free, he is free indeed." "Having been made free from sin, he has become the servant of righteousness; and has his fruit unto holiness." Such is one of the effects, ascribed to salvation, by the sacred Scriptures; and such a result of salvation from sin is attested by the experience of all ages. The gay votary of soul-debasing sensual pleasure, becomes "sober, grave, temperate"—regardful of rational dignity, watchful against enervating and disordering excess, in any kind of indulgence, and diligent in endeavors at every sort of improvement, mental, moral and social. The *motto*, of every one so saved, is "Whatsoever things are true; whatsoever things *are* honest; whatsoever things *are* just; whatsoever things *are* pure; whatsoever things *are* lovely; whatsoever things *are* of

good report—if *there be* any virtue, and if *there be* any praise, think on these things.” In the spirit of this motto, the profane man, whose language *was* dishonorable to his own character, offensive to right-minded associates and insulting to God, which gave expression to violent and overmastering passion, or consisted in senseless, disgusting and shocking expletives, *now* speaks in a language befitting a rational being, and calculated to “minister grace to the hearer.” He, whose regard for truth was not sufficient to enable him to resist the temptation of sacrificing it, to procure the reputation of wit and humor—to “set the table in a roar” of laughter—to escape from the inconvenience of some by-gone fault, or to win some future advantage, *now* speaks the truth and only the truth, on all occasions. He, that, before being saved from sin, was regardless of the rights of others, when those rights interfered with what he considered his own interest; and, who, therefore, perpetrated any wrong towards his fellow-men, affecting either their persons, their property or their reputation, which he supposed would be conducive to his own advantage, *now* holds the rights of his neighbors so sacred that, rather than inflict wrong upon them, he would submit to suffer wrong at their hands. “As he would that all men should do to him,” so, now, he is disposed to “do to them.” Nor, is he satisfied with having met the claims of honesty and justice, in his intercourse with his fellow-men—he seeks, by courtesy, by kindness, by amiable and conciliatory deportment, to soothe and to cheer those upon whom the influence of his character operates, whether in the domestic circle or in general society. And, apart from social considerations, he aims at attaining, in his own person, “to the stature of a man,” in all

virtuous development, and in all praise-worthy qualities; that he may stand approved in the sight of God, and in the estimation of his own conscience "a perfect and upright man—one that feareth God and escheweth evil."

2. Salvation from sin, not only restores moral freedom, and opens, before its subject, a course of holy living, but furnishes also the most effective motives to impel him onward in that way. It shows him how far gone he has been from the way of righteousness—how deep sunk in the degradation of his moral standing; and, consequently, the vigorous, diligent and persevering effort it will require to enable him to regain what he has lost by sin. He sees that he must "forget the things that are behind"—count as nothing the attainments already made—"reaching forth unto those things which are before"—the, as yet, unattained excellencies of Christian character—he must "PRESS to the mark"—must task every energy to its utmost efficiency, that he may come to "the mark for the prize." Below, or short of that mark, the "prize of the high calling, of God in Christ Jesus" is not assured to those who aim at securing it. The most powerful motives are thus presented to the self-love of him who has been saved from sin, to "go on unto perfection." And, then, to the higher principles of his nature, how mighty the motives to holy living, which are furnished by this salvation by faith in Christ! It reveals man to himself as, in the highest and most sacred sense, the property of God—as "not his own, but bought with a price"—not "with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ"—how manifest and how imperative, then, his obligation, to devote himself to the service of God! How obvious and how sacred his duty, to "glorify God, in his body and in

his spirit, which are God's," by a right so dearly acquired ! This motive is vastly strengthened by the fact, that God was induced to this wonderful transaction — the redemption of man — by no selfish consideration whatever, but by love — love to man ! — love to man, while in sin ! — a rebel against Himself ! " God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Nothing beside, bearing any appreciable proportion to this love of God to the human race, has ever been witnessed in the universe of sentient and moral beings. A love so more than merely disinterested, so great and prompting so dearly-prized a sacrifice ! Man not only deserved no love, on account of moral worth, but was a proper subject for loathing and abhorrence, and, by sin, was in open and unrelenting hostility against God. His was the " carnal mind, which is enmity against God — not subject to the law of God, neither can be." Still, loathsome and hostile to him as man was, " God *so* loved him, AS TO GIVE HIS ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON," to be " a sacrifice for the sin," by which he had rendered himself thus loathsome and hostile ! Of all this, the faith, by which the sinner is saved, impresses a strong and an affecting conviction upon the mind ; and exhibits the necessary dependence of salvation upon the sacrifice so made, and upon the love, which prompted its being made. How urgent the conviction of obligation, how strong the sense of gratitude which must arise in the heart of the sinner thus saved ! And, what motive to action can be so effective as gratitude for great and undeserved kindness ? If gratitude to God, for His love, so unmerited, His gift, so stupendously great, His salvation, so indispensable to our well-being, move us not to " serve and please Him," what would

be sufficient to do it? Surely, no motive would be sufficient!

Once more: salvation from sin opens up, before the believer, the prospect of "an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away," to be shared "with the saints in light," before the presence of an infinitely holy God, "where nothing that defileth, nor that is unclean—that worketh abomination or maketh a lie," can ever enter. For such an inheritance, in such an association and before such a Presence, who can fail to perceive the importance—the indispensable necessity of an appropriate preparation? And, what a motive, to holy living, is, therefore, the hope of eternal life with God! Hence, the sacred writer declares, that "he that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure." The necessity of this is obvious, upon the plainest principles of social fitness. "Two cannot walk together, *in harmony*, unless they be agreed." "Light and darkness cannot dwell together." Now, no two opposites can be more utterly antipodal than are sin and holiness: nor, is there any provision, in the Divine plan for the recovery of man, for the renovation or purification of man's moral nature, after "the pulse of life stands still." Wherefore, it is, and, by the sinner saved by faith in Christ, it is felt to be of supreme importance to his eternal well-being, that his moral preparation should be perfected during life. And, as the period of life is so entirely uncertain, what a spur is the hope of eternal life, to the believer, to give "all diligence, to make his calling and election sure!" Were it possible that the pure atmosphere of heaven should be polluted by the admission into it of an unsanctified sinner, what happiness could he enjoy? All his

moral tastes would be offended—in the eyes of his pure associates, he would be loathsome ; and he must constantly feel their purity a reproach to him. In such circumstances, would not hell itself be to him a refuge ? The experiment can never be tried ; but, let the impure and rebellious of heart be shut up to the society of the pure, the pious and the devout even here ; and, imperfect as will be the comparison which he can make of his actual condition and his supposed one in heaven, he will not fail to find ample reason to deprecate an eternal residence among the holy ones, in the presence of a holy God.

3. A third effect of salvation from sin, by faith in Christ, is *a sense of peace with God*. A sense of guilt induces disquiet, perturbation and fearful apprehensions, in the bosom where it rankles. That sense of guilt is an assurance that God—the infinitely wise, holy and powerful God, is angry at the sinner—that all His infinite attributes and illimitable resources are pledged to his punishment. His conscience assures him that this is simply just—that he deserves to sustain this terrible relation to God. He has no peace with God—he has, moreover, no peace in himself. The higher and nobler faculties of his own nature rise up and condemn and denounce him. How miserable his condition ! But, salvation comes ! It removes his guilt. It hushes the clamor of conscience. It shows God reconciled to the sinner. It reconciles the sinner to himself. “Being justified by faith, he has peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Not only are peaceful relations established between him and God, but he has, in consequence of his justification by faith, peace with God. How, then, does justification communicate or occasion this peace ? Could

it have this effect, if the justification itself were unknown ? We unhesitatingly answer it could not. Any operation or change, that exercises an influence upon the mind of man, and whose connection with the influence so exerted can be ascertained, *must* be known to have been performed or to have taken place, in order to the exertion of such influence. In all cases, we believe, in which our blessed Saviour, while upon earth, pardoned the sins of penitents, He announced to them, in clear and unequivocal terms, the fact of their being so pardoned. And, why should He have communicated a knowledge of the fact in the days of His flesh, and withhold it from those who are pardoned, now that He has withdrawn His personal presence from the earth ? Is the *knowledge* of pardon less important *now* than it was *then* ? Or, can there be any difficulty in His imparting to the pardoned, an assured knowledge of their justification ? Can there be any difficulty in the way of Him, who dwells in the hearts of His people, in making them aware of His presence, and of the precise character of His operations upon them ? No ! Surely, there can be none whatever. Why, then, we repeat, should He withhold a knowledge of pardon, where He grants it, in these days ; whereas, in the days of His flesh, He always proclaimed the fact to those whose sins He pardoned ?

But, it may be asked, ' If He do make *known*, to those who are justified, by faith, that that most important change has passed upon their relation to God, by what means does He communicate that knowledge ? Do they arrive at it by a process of reasoning upon their own mental phenomena and their moral state ? Many contend that the only acquaintance with the fact, enjoyed by the justified, is the result of such a process. We do not

wonder that *these* should repudiate the idea of *assurance* or *knowledge*; and restrain the privilege of Christians, in this respect, to a faint, hesitating persuasion, which they, strangely enough, denominate *a hope*. A *hope* that our sin *is* pardoned! That we *are* the children of God!! Does not *hope* **ALWAYS** look to a *future* desirable event? Can *hope*, without absurdity, be predicated of a *past event*, or of a *present state*? We think not. To talk, therefore, of a *hope* that we are pardoned or justified, that we are children of God by adoption, that we have "passed from death unto life"—is to talk with utter disregard of the proper meaning of *all* language. *So* spake not the primitive Christians, of *their* religious experience—*they KNEW*; they *were ASSURED*. And, how did they obtain their knowledge, their assurance? Not by reasonings on their own state, nor by inferences from the promises of the Gospel; but, by means of the *direct, explicit* testimony of God, *to them*, of the fact, of which their knowledge and assurance were predicated. We say not that the state—the moral state of the believer does not *indicate* the fact of justification; or, that the promises of God do not warrant the most confident inferences of that fact, where there is a *certainty* that the believer stands in that relation to God which is contemplated by those promises; but, we do say, that our knowledge of our moral state is scarcely accurate enough, to warrant very great dependence on our reasonings from it; and, that there is hardly sufficient certainty in our knowledge of the relation in which we stand to God, to justify much confidence in the inference we may draw from the promises of God adapted to it, in regard to our justification. We conclude, therefore, that, as God can have no difficulty in communicating the fact

of their justification to penitent believers—as it is of vast importance to the recipients of that benefit that they should know that they are so—and that as there are no other conceivable means by which they can obtain that knowledge, He does impart it to them directly, clearly and with certainty. This He does by the agency of the Holy Ghost, who comes into the world as the official “Comforter” of the followers of Christ. He “beareth witness with their spirits that they are the sons” and daughters “of God.” He “seals them,” as belonging to God, “unto the day of redemption.” “Sent forth into their hearts, crying Abba! Father!” He is the witness of their adoption into the household of God. He, it is, then, who brings, to the believing penitent, the assurance of pardon. He imparts the knowledge of justification. From this knowledge, as already intimated, peace flows, as a natural effect—peace with God and peace of conscience. The denunciations of wrath, by the Divine law, are silenced: the clamors of conscience are hushed; and the believer looks up, by faith, through Jesus Christ, to receive the approving smile of his so lately wrathful Sovereign. What a change! How ineffably sweet the repose of soul experienced by him, who was so lately racked and torn by the consciousness of guilt, the assurance of Divine wrath and the apprehension of “everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power,” when he hears the unmistakable announcement, by the Holy Ghost, “Thy sins are forgiven thee!” Not calmer was the bosom of the Galilean lake, when the incarnate Divinity had arrested it, in its wildest commotion, and had said to it, in a voice which all creation must ever obey—“Peace, be still!”

4. Another effect of salvation from sin, by faith in Christ, is HOPE—"hope of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven," for those who are thus saved. This hope is fully warranted by the fact of salvation from sin. The blessed Saviour says: "In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go, to prepare a place for you. And, if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that, where I am, *there ye may be also.*"—*John xiv, 2, 3.* And, St. Paul says: "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, them also that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him. Then we, which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord."—*1 Thessalonians iv, 14–17.* St. Peter is very explicit, in his authorization of the hope in question: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation."—*1 Peter i, 3–5.* This is a hope "full of glory." A hope of being housed from all harm and danger forever—of happiness appropriate to the susceptibilities, and adequate to the capacities of the redeemed and immortal spirit—of association, in this felicity, with the good of all ages and all worlds, saints and martyrs, patriarchs, prophets and apostles, angels, seraphim and cherubim—of "seeing Jesus, as he is," in His glorified humanity, in His incarnated Divinity, bearing,

forever, in His sacred Person, the scars of His agony, the mementos of His wondrous love to man—of dwelling forever in the presence and under the smile of the glorious Trinity in Unity.

5. From this hope, and, consequently, from the salvation from which it springs, results joy—"joy unspeakable and full of glory." This is a higher species of enjoyment than peace. Joy excites, animates and exhilarates the soul. It is more highly *appreciated*, though really not of more importance than peace; because it is more intensely felt; because it more excites the soul; because it more expands the bosom; because it swells the heart with delightful emotions. The joy of Christian hope is rational, because it is well founded, and because its objects are worthy of the soul, both on account of their intrinsic excellence, and on account of their indestructible nature. Objects, of earth-bound hope, are never adequate to the capacities of the soul—always uncertain as to their ministrations and evanescent in their duration. Hence, the joy of earthly hope must ever be dashed with apprehensions of disappointment and of loss. But, the joy, resulting from Christian hope, has no such apprehensions, to abate its influence upon the heart. It is, therefore, pure, soul-filling and exultant. Accurately adapted to the susceptibilities of the soul, and commensurate to her capacities, this joy never palls upon those susceptibilities—never exhausts the energies of its subject—never ceases to be relished. Like the pure water, provided by the infinitely wise Creator, to slake the thirst and to resuscitate the wasted energies of animals, this joy is ever grateful to the taste; and is so, because it is an *original* provision of Infinite Wisdom for the happiness of man.

6. *Triumph over the fear of death*, is an effect of salvation from sin, by faith in Christ. The Christian can boast no stoical indifference at the approach of death. He, more than most others, appreciates the importance of that great change in the condition of man. He sees a most important connection between the events of life and its awful close. He knows that death sets the seal of changeless permanency on the human character, and, consequently, terminates forever the season of probation. He traces, too, the connection of death with man's future, eternal destiny—that that destiny becomes, in the moment of death, certain, unchangeable and eternal. He cannot, therefore, regard death as a light matter—as an event to be encountered with insensibility or unconcern. He regards it, accordingly, as of the gravest character, the highest concernment. The questions, in relation to it, which mainly interest him, are, “whether his work of probation has been well performed?” Whether his “calling and election” to eternal life, have been made “sure?” Whether he has been “made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light?” Whether he is “saved from sin, through faith in Christ?” Satisfied in these matters, he looks upon death as no longer the “king of terrors.” He has become rather a messenger of good tidings. He hails his approach as that of a friend, to release him from the cares and sorrows, the infirmities and sufferings of this life, and to be his assured, though rough and hideous-looking usher, into the presence-chamber of his God and Saviour. Hence, he can calmly and serenely resign himself to the offices to be performed upon him by death, in order to his release from earth, and his introduction into the realms of eternal blessedness. What wonder, then,

if with surprise and exultation, he should apostrophize death in the language of St. Paul? “O, Death! where is thy sting?” He has been disarmed of that terrible weapon—for, it is *sin*; and, he, who is saved from sin, meets death disarmed and subdued. Well, then, may the Christian close his career with the shout of victory, and with devout gratitude to Him, who has caused him to triumph—“Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ!”

These effects of salvation from sin, through faith in Christ, are all realized in this life; and they have been exemplified, in thousands of instances, in the experience of penitent believers in Jesus Christ. Indeed, they have never failed to result from salvation by faith, in exact proportion to the measure and the energy of the faith, by which that salvation was achieved. But, there is one effect, or, perhaps, more properly, consequence, that will follow upon this salvation, which can have its development only in that state of immortality and purely spiritual existence which awaits man beyond the grave. This consequence shall be seen, in its perfect development, when “the nations of **THEM WHICH ARE SAVED** shall walk in the light” of the “holy City, New Jerusalem,” which John saw “coming down from God out of heaven;” whose inhabitants shall be so honored and blessed as to have “God to dwell with them”—to be “His people,” and to have Him to “be their God.” To them, there shall be “no more death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain.” There, in the full fruition of the hope, which prompted them to a holy life, while they were in their state of *trial*, “they shall walk in white,” before the presence of the Holy One, “for they are worthy.” They

hall mingle with the hosts of the redeemed, and with the ministering hosts, of higher orders, who have "kept their first estate," in the soul-ravishing worship and praise, which are rendered uninterruptingly to God and the Lamb forever. Noble employment! Pure, elevated, soul-filling elicity! Worthy of God to confer, adequate to the capacity of man to enjoy is this perennial blessedness, to which those, who are saved from sin by faith, shall be admitted, and in which they shall be guaranteed an ample participation, while God shall sit upon His throne, and eternity roll her never-ceasing round! O, what folly, what madness to neglect a salvation, so fruitful in most important results in this life, and so indispensable to eternal blessedness in the life to come! How promptly, how diligently, how perseveringly should every fallen child of Adam seek his salvation, so dearly purchased for us by Christ, so kindly offered to us in the Gospel of His grace! May God enable and incline us all to be "wise unto salvation," that we may "lay hold on eternal life!" Amen!

DISCOURSE XVII.

THE GENERAL JUDGMENT.

He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom He hath ordained.—Acts xvii, 31.

IN times of greater simplicity and of less intellectual hardihood than the present, the bare announcement of the text would have been sufficient to prevent all question of the necessity or of the forthcoming of a *general judgment* of mankind, with a view to their final destiny. But, the age in which we live is so profoundly rational in its views, so confident in its perspicacity and so untrammelled by implicit deference to any authority—even the Divine—that, in the face of the text, and of many other clear declarations of Revelation to the same effect, there are many—Christians! who querulously inquire what necessity there is for *such* a judgment. And, there are others, a little more daring, who roundly deny that there ever will be such a judgment; because, forsooth, no necessity exists that there should be one! Now, all this is very different, we apprehend, from an humble and reverential inquiry into the purpose of the general judgment—admitted, without question, on the authority of Revelation, to have been appointed by the Supreme Ruler of the world. This *latter*, we conceive, is a becoming and useful employment

of the rational faculties with which we are endowed—the *former*, we esteem a wholly unjustifiable boldness—indeed, a profane exhibition of audacity, in those who profess to accredit the Divine Revelation of those Scriptures, in which the announcement of such a day of general judgment is so clearly, so solemnly and so frequently made.

When it is said, that “God hath appointed a DAY, in which He will judge the world in righteousness,” we are by no means to understand that the judgment of the world will occupy *only* twenty-four hours. The Scriptures are familiar with a much more liberal signification of the term *day*. Thus: our Saviour says to the Jews: “Your father, Abraham, rejoiced to see my DAY, and he saw it and was glad.” He certainly did not mean to say that Abraham rejoiced to see any particular twenty-four hours of the Saviour’s life, but its whole course, for the redemption of mankind, from His incarnation till His return to the right hand of the Majesty on high—the whole term of His saving mission among men. Again: when the Saviour weeps over Jerusalem and says: “Oh, that thou hadst known, even thou, at least, in this thy DAY, the things that belong to thy peace!” He, surely, has not in view any particular twenty-four hours, in which their privileges were so precious, but the whole season of His ministry among them. So, the DAY appointed for the judgment of the world, *may*, for aught we know; be equal in duration to a thousand years—it will certainly be a term of sufficient length for the transaction of that great business. Nor, will there be any hardship in the attendance required, during any length to which the term *may* be extended; as the parties concerned will be spiritual

and immortal in their natures, needing no respite from watchfulness or activity, nor, consequently, requiring the vicissitudes of light and darkness. Of the probable length of the term of judgment, we have, and can have no knowledge; nor have we any interest in knowing. It is enough for us to know that God hath appointed such a day or term, that it will certainly come and that it will be of sufficient duration for the accomplishment of the purpose for which it was appointed.

This assumed, we shall, in accordance with the views presented above, inquire into the necessity of *such* a judgment, by way of introduction to what we have to say in regard to that judgment itself; and,

1. A *general* judgment of mankind is by no means necessary to the authority of the Divine decision, in any individual case. God's right or authority to judge men rests upon His relation to them, as their benevolent Creator, who endued them with powers to know, to love, to enjoy and to obey Him; and, who, consequently, has a clear and an indubitable right to hold them responsible for the exercise, neglect or perversion of these powers. This right, to hold them responsible, infers the right of entering into judgment with them in any manner, public or private, individually or in masses, as He may choose; and His judgment would be as valid and as effective, so far as the individual is concerned, if covered from the eye of every other creature, as if it were exhibited before the congregation of all worlds.

2. Nor, is *such* a judgment necessary to secure a righteous sentence from the Judge. He is so utterly remote from all dependence, on all without His own infinitely perfect nature, that He needs the presence of no

witnesses to render Him regardful of the claims of justice towards those whose cases He adjudicates. These would be equally sacred with Him, if the adjudication were to take place in the solitude of a cavern, shrouded by the darkness of midnight, as if it took place in meridian light, before an assembled universe.

3. Neither is a *general* judgment necessary to ascertain, to the individual judged, the character or the justice of the sentence awarded to him, whether of condemnation or approval, whether for weal or woe. All this could be as effectually accomplished in a private as in a public, in an individual as in a general judgment. Nay, we have reason to believe that every individual of the human family, so soon as his accountable career is closed, enters upon his final destiny, with a perfect assurance of the justice of the fate assigned to him. The story of the rich man and Lazarus, seems to put this beyond all question. So far, then, as justice to the individual, or his own perfect satisfaction that he has received such justice is concerned, a general and public adjudication is not necessary.

4. But, a public adjudication, in the case of every individual to be judged, is necessary, that a manifestation of the righteousness of their fate may be made to their fellow-creatures. Man, we know, and other intelligent and moral beings, we presume, were formed for society. Society involves the fact of reciprocal influence; and, therefore, whatever is important to any one member of a society, must have more or less interest for all the members of such society. How profound the interest, then, with which the whole human race must regard the eternal destiny of each individual of that race! We have reason given us, in the Word of God, to believe that creatures

of a higher order than man share, in this social feeling, with the human family. It may, therefore, be regarded as necessary to the social relation of man to man, and that of other intellectual and moral beings to the human family, that the adjudication of the case of each individual should be in the presence and subject to the scrutiny of all intellectual and moral beings. This can hardly be deemed practicable on any other supposition than that the whole intellectual and moral world should be assembled at the time and place designated for the adjudication of all, lying under the same responsibility to the universal Judge—in the language of the text, that there should be “a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness.” We know that, throughout the whole Sacred Volume, God is represented as being solicitous to declare—to make manifest, to His intellectual and moral creatures, the benevolence, the truth and the righteousness of His character and government. This solicitude, cannot have for its object any personal interest of His own; for, He is infinitely above the praise or censure of His creatures. The object, then, must be that, by presenting to them, in His own person, an instance of moral perfection, He might prompt His intellectual and moral creatures to emulate such excellence, and, thereby, secure their own individual and social well-being. And, if this solicitude is evinced in regard to the current administration of the Divine government, and the exhibition of the Divine character, during the vicissitudes of a transient state, in which change is constant experience, may we not reasonably suppose that it will prevail in a still higher degree, in regard to the awards of eternal and changeless destiny?

To render more apparent the necessity of this *public*

adjudication of human character and doom, we shall make a few suppositions, the probability of which will not, we presume, be questioned. We shall suppose, then, a pious wife, whose affections and life are consecrated to God — whose husband is amiable and affectionate; but, who has only religion enough to permit his wife to suppose that his estimable qualities are the fruits of piety. She dies in the triumph of faith, and in a cheering persuasion of *his* piety, and a consequent hope that he will follow her to the regions of blessedness. But, alas! he follows her not thither, having neglected to make religion the business of his life, as she made it the business of her's. How important that the wife, at least, should witness the adjudication of his case, that she may be able to do justice to its righteousness!

We suppose, next, a minister of the Gospel, learned, eloquent, orthodox and zealous. Crowds attend his ministry, and are deeply — many of them, probably, *savinely* impressed by it. None, perhaps, entertain any doubt of his personal piety; as his life is in unimpeachable consistency with his vocation, so far, at least, as it is subject to public observation. Indeed, he himself may "lay the flattering unction to his soul," that he is a child of God, and an heir of immortal felicity and glory. When, therefore, he shall appear before the righteous Judge, and shall exhibit his claims to approbation and reward — "I have eaten and drunken in Thy presence — in Thy name have I cast out Devils, and in Thy name done many wonderful works — Thou hast taught in our streets; and I have repeated Thy teachings with careful exactitude and with impressive earnestness and zeal" — how surprised must he himself be — how utterly confounded must be the

thousands, who hung, with admiration, upon his thrilling Gospel ministry, while he so eloquently preached the word of salvation on earth, when they shall hear the righteous Judge pronounce sentence of irrepealable banishment against him, accompanied by the announcement of the previously unimagined fact—"I never knew you!" And, how important, to a just appreciation of the righteous judgment of God, in his case, that the adjudication of that case should be open to public observation and scrutiny!

One more supposition we bring forward—it is of one, who, during the whole of life, exhibited so much of eccentricity, irregularity and imperfection as to render his profession of religion exceedingly equivocal to all who were acquainted with him. The enemies of religion took a malignant pleasure in pointing out, especially to those who were just entering upon a course of piety, the many and striking incongruities between his life and a course of intelligent consistent piety. Religious people were scandalized by the discrepancies in his profession and practice, and felt that the cause of piety, if not absolutely disgraced, was, at least, not honored by his adhesion to it. And, neither in life nor in death, did he afford, to the most clear-sighted observers, evidence, upon which they could rely with confidence, to prove whether he were a hypocrite or an honest-hearted Christian. When, therefore, he shall be found among the saved, how important will it be that the adjudication of his case shall be open to public inspection, that the judgment may be seen to be in righteousness! These suppositious cases are but types of innumerable classes of cases, which, unless publicly adjudicated, would not fail to reflect on the righteousness of the Divine government, in the estimation of those who, from the

imperfection of their information, can "judge only from appearance." We conclude, therefore, that, in order to the "*manifestation of the righteous judgment of God*," it is necessary that the judgment of every man should be public; and, that, to render this practicable, there must be a simultaneous gathering of the whole human race for the purpose—in other words, that the judgment, in order to be public, must be *general*.

We shall now consider some of the antecedents of the judgment, a connection between which and that stupendous event is established by the sacred Scriptures.

1. The first of these, which we shall notice, is that *the offer of eternal salvation will have been made to all men*. The Psalmist, when he characterizes the throne of the Judge, takes care to inform us that "Mercy and Truth go before His face;" and, in connection with our text, the apostle informs his auditors, that, "now, He commandeth all men everywhere to repent; *because* He hath appointed a day," etc. Elsewhere, we are taught, by the blessed Saviour, that "the Gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all nations," before the end shall come. Not, then, till the last child of Adam's fallen, but redeemed race shall have had an available offer of eternal life, shall that day of destiny dawn upon our world. It will not be necessary, in order to this, that the Gospel shall be preached *in form* "to every creature under heaven." The Gospel was preached to the "spirits in prison, in the days of Noah, while the Ark was a preparing." It was also preached to the Israelites in the days of Moses; for, the apostle, speaking of them, says: "To us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them." It is enough, if the intention of the Gospel, in offering salvation to the

sinner, be carried into effect, no matter by what means it is done. "They who have not the law," (by a parity of reason, the Gospel,) "are a law" (a Gospel) "unto themselves; and show the works of the law" (Gospel) "written upon their hearts—their conscience bearing them witness, and their thoughts, the meanwhile, accusing, or else excusing one another:" so that, "in every nation, he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." And, we hesitate not to affirm that, ere the coming of the Day of Judgment, Christ will, in an available manner, have offered Himself to every child of man, as "a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and remission of sins." Never will He give up His vineyard, to the consuming fires of the great day, till He can say: "What more could I have done to my vineyard, that I have not done in it?" When the "Mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life," and the "Truth which is after godliness," and by which God sanctifies the soul, shall have exerted their influence towards human salvation, so far as is compatible with human agency, then, and not till then, will Christ "deliver up the (mediatorial) kingdom to God, even the Father." Then, and not before, will the human race be ripe for the judgment of God in righteousness. We argue this, in perfect confidence, from the well-established facts, that Christ "gave Himself a ransom for all men"—"tasted death for every man"—will have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth; for, it were grossly preposterous to affirm all this of Him, if He, who alone can do it, do not afford to every man an *available* offer of the salvation purchased by Him for every man, and which He wills all men to obtain.

2. The establishment and exhibition of the throne of Judgment are the next antecedent of the great assize to which we shall direct attention. *Where* that throne will be set up, we have no positive information. We think it cannot be upon the earth or in the visible heavens; for, we are expressly instructed that these shall both “flee from His presence;” and, this, we presume, is affirmed of His “coming to judge the world in righteousness.” But, wherever established, it will be a most conspicuous object—as “a city set upon a hill.” Its stupendous elevation and dazzling splendor will render it visible to the whole universe; and its attractive influence will draw to it all intellectual and moral existence. Space, infinite space, will probably be the scene of this great transaction, without any landmark known to the inferior events of time, to indicate its topographical situation. The throne to be erected is, in the sacred Scriptures, characterized as a “great white throne,” and its “habitation” declared to be “justice and judgment.” We understand, from both these evidently tropical representations, that the business to be transacted, from *this* seat of supreme authority, is one of pure and unmixed justice. Hitherto, the Saviour of sinners is seen occupying a “throne of grace”—a “mediatorial seat, at the right-hand of the Father,” there to make intercession for sinners; and thence to issue pardon and supplies of the grace, needful for salvation. Now, His throne of *judgment* is prepared, whence no grace, no pardon will proceed, but justice, pure, strict, unmitigated justice. Before, or beside *that* throne, there will be “no patron, intercessor none!” No plea for mercy, no application for grace will be admitted—no respite from merited doom, for further trial, be granted; but an exact apprecia-

tion of character, and a rigorously just distribution of rewards will go forth from this seat of righteous retribution, both to the righteous and the wicked.

3. The third antecedent of the judgment, claiming attention, is the taking of His seat, on the throne, by the righteous Judge. And, who is the Personage, who lays claim, allowed claim to that stupendous dignity? It is the Son of Man! It is He, who was born in a stable, at Bethlehem! It is He, who was hurried away to Egypt, in His infancy, to preserve Him from the furious jealousy of ambitious Herod! It is He, who, through a life of thirty-three years, was a "man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;" whose poverty exceeded that of the foxes and of fowls of the air! It is He, who was "despised and rejected of men!"—"who "submitted His face to shame and spitting, and His back to the smiters!"—who died the ignominious and cruel death of the cross—a death awarded only to a slave! Yes: *this* is the SAME! but, oh, how changed! "His visage, once so marred more than that of any other man," is too glorious now to be beheld, with open face, by even the strongest-sighted seraphim, that dwell in the circle of glory that surrounds the throne of the Eternal Brightness. Before the insufferable glory and majesty of that once dishonored face, the heavens and the earth flee away, and no place is found for them. Yes! it is the meek, the humble, the persecuted, the crucified Jesus, who, with such overpowering Majesty, now occupies the throne of *final* and universal judgment. So our text, and many other portions of the sacred Scriptures assure us. And, well is He qualified to exercise the functions of His high office! As man, He knows what was in man—his capabilities, his weak-

nesses, his temptations. He can, therefore, from "a feeling of our infirmities," allow for unavoidable failures, as well as determine what could have been done in any case of duty in question. As God, He has known, minutely, the whole tenor of the life of every man—not its great historic events merely, but every obscure, unnoted act, every heedless or whispered word, every vagrant but indulged imagination. These all go to the formation of character; and these will all be, consequently, taken into account, in the judgment of the great day. Infinite moral excellence will secure from the Judge an impartial investigation and a righteous decision. No selfish interest, no blind partiality or prejudice, no corrupt influence can bias the current of justice, administered by Jehovah Jesus. "The Judge of all the earth *will* do right."

Attendant on the Judge, as ministers of His will, the hosts of heaven will descend with Him. Circle within circle and rank above rank, they will surround the seat supreme. Imagination faints under the vain attempt to conceive of the splendor of this glorious cortege. The purity of cherubim, the brightness and intense ardor of seraphim, veiled in humble self-oblivion, bow reverently before the presence of His glory. The mild majesty of Gabriel, the frequent and benign internuncio between God and man, before whom the holy and magnanimous Daniel fainted and became dumb with awe, who announced to the wondering Virgin the honor God was about to confer upon her, in rendering her by miraculous influence, the mother of the Son of God,—Gabriel, as is his high privilege, stands now as he has ever been accustomed to stand, in the presence of the Divine Majesty, alert to fly to the ends of the universe to execute the Divine behests.

And, Michael, the archangel, prince of the celestial hosts, is there, towering in majesty unrivaled by that of any created being. Still, even his majesty is but derived and subordinate, paling before the brightness of the “excellent glory” of “Him that sitteth upon the throne.” These, with all the subordinate ranks of the celestial hierarchy, stand around the judgment-seat of the King Messiah, to receive and execute, with the promptitude of swift obedience, the orders which He shall issue.

4. The fourth antecedent of the judgment, to which attention will be directed, is the bringing before the judgment-seat of the parties to be judged, on this great occasion. Summoned from their dark prison-house, and impelled by an influence or a force which they cannot resist, the Devil and his angels are arraigned before the bar of the righteous Judge. “Reserved,” since they left their first estate, by transgression of the law of their Creator and Sovereign, “in chains, under darkness,” for this day of final adjudication, and retribution, they now cower beneath the eye of their Judge, and await from Him the doom which their iniquity has deserved, and which they sadly anticipate will consign them to the fierce rage of everlasting burnings.

And, now, “the voice of the archangel and the trump of God have been heard, summoning Adam and Eve, with all their innumerable posterity, to “stand before God.” The voice of this summons has sounded to the depths of Old Ocean, penetrated the solid marble walls of the mausoleum and the massive piles of mound and pyramid and has entered the ear of Death; and, wherever it has entered, it has awaked the dead from their long and heavy slumber. Starting up; and, now, spiritual and

immortal, as well in body as in soul, they have followed the sound of the summons toward the judgment-seat. Meantime, those who had lived on, to this day of wonders, pass, without the process of death, into the condition of those who have been just raised from the dead. The power which could restore life to the dead, could, as readily operate a change, upon the living, that would bring them, "in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye," into the same state, of spirituality and immortality, into which the dead had been raised. And, now, man, in his entire nature, soul and body—man, in all his thousand generations, from Adam to his last descendant—man, immortal as when he was created, and, therefore, capable of eternal destinies—MAN stands before God, to be judged and rewarded for "the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good, or whether they have been evil." No class of mankind will be excused from an appearance before this impartial tribunal. Indeed, the distinctions, that were deemed so important on earth, will now be remembered only as they exerted a moral influence, for good or evil. Kings and emperors will stand on a perfect level with the most squalid beggar, that trailed out a miserable existence in their dominions, so far as rank and consequence are concerned; and, the most refined votaries of fashion will have no higher claims to consideration, than the most uncultivated and boorish of their race, upon whom they looked with scorn or ridicule. All are equals, in the eye of the Judge and in their relation to the judgment. Only *man* will be taken account of—the adventitious circumstances of life will be wholly disregarded. Moral distinctions alone will affect the position and well-being of man, at the judgment-bar of God.

We now proceed to consider the process of the judgment.

1. The first act, in this beyond measure important and interesting transaction, is the *opening of the books*. St. John says: "I saw a great white throne and Him that sat thereon, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works." There is evidently a distinction intended between "*the books, which were opened*," and the *other book* which was opened, which was the book of life;" and it is, we think, of the *former* that it is said, "the dead were judged out of those things that were written in *the books*." We think so; because it would seem that the *book of life* is exclusively a register of those who shall be approved in the judgment, and who shall, therefore, escape the punishment of the wicked: whereas, *the dead*, without distinction, are "judged out of those things that are written in *the books*." What, then, are we to understand by the books, and by their being opened? There is, doubtless a reference to a practice, common—perhaps nearly universal—of producing, in courts of law, the laws governing the cases which are to be tried, and of explaining and showing the bearing of those laws. By *the books*, we understand the various dispensations of grace and law under which men have lived; and by the opening of the books we understand a full and clear exposition of the extent of their requirements, whether greater or less, and of the nice adaptation of those requirements to the

circumstances in which the subjects of those dispensations respectively were placed. A thousand scriptures instruct us that the same rule of judgment will not be applied to him who has lived in the darkness of heathenism, and to him upon whom the effulgence of Gospel-light has been poured forth. And, what we are thus taught by the Scriptures, is in accordance with the common-sense apprehension of equal justice, found in all men whose minds have not been stultified by some overmastering pre-conception—some dogma of a creed, adopted without a full knowledge of all its bearings. It would be palpably unjust to judge a man, whose entire acquaintance with the Divine economy was summed in the Noachic precepts, by the same rule by which Abraham, and those enlightened by the revelations made to him, would be righteously judged; as it would to judge Abraham and his cotemporaries by the rule governing in the case of one to whom “the law was given by Moses.” Still more flagrant would be the injustice of holding a disciple of Moses amenable to the rule deciding the case of one to whom the Saviour has “brought life and immortality to light, by the Gospel.” Admitting these views to be correct, how important to a just appreciation of the judgment of God, upon the men who have lived in such varied circumstances of enlightenment and privilege, that these varied circumstances should be made plain to the apprehension of all who shall witness that judgment! And, this is what we understand by the opening of the books, out of which men are to be judged. By this means, the rule governing in the adjudication of all the various classes, and, when necessary, in the peculiarities of individual cases, will be rendered apparent to every witness of the judicial proceedings of the great day;

and, all will, thereby, be enabled, so far as the law of each case is concerned, to judge of the equity of the proceedings. It is true, that the essential principles of the rule of judgment, under all the various dispensations, are the same, whatever difference in modification and extent of requirement may distinguish the rule under those various dispensations. 'Love to God and conformity to His *known* will, and kindness and beneficence to fellow-creatures are, we believe, those essential principles.

2. The second act, in these important judicial proceedings, is the ascertaining of the life's history which belongs to every human being who stands before God in judgment. We do not mean by ascertaining this history, the bringing of it to the knowledge of the Judge. This were wholly needless; as there has never been, in the life of one individual of the human race, a single act, no matter how obscure or apparently unimportant, a word, however heedlessly uttered, or an indulged thought, how vagrant and fruitless soever, to which He has not been an attentive witness, or which has faded from His remembrance. He has ever been "about their bed and about their path, spying out all their ways;" and "the thoughts of His heart are to all generations." Nor, probably, is it necessary to ascertain life's history with a view to remind the adjudged of what they themselves have been or have done. If "death-beds are detectors of the heart," if they often arouse a vivid recollection of long-forgotten scenes in life, what may we not suppose will be the effect of the judgment-solemnities, in arraying before each man the whole history of his life—a history upon which eternal destiny is to depend! Is it not probable that the mind, quickened to immortal energy, will, in a very brief space

of time, retrace the whole of life's progress, and call up every event, every action, every word and every thought, which is to exert an influence on the decision of a fate so important and so changeless as that which awaits every one before the judgment-seat? But, however fully and minutely the Judge may know the life's history of every one before Him for judgment, and, however accurately each individual may know his own life's history, yet, in order to the "revelation of the righteous judgment of God," to the assembled universe, it is necessary that the life's history of all the judged should be made publicly known. By what process this will be effected, we are not informed. The all-cognizant Judge *may* declare the history of all—or each individual *may be* constrained to relate his own history—or associates in life *may be* required and compelled to testify, to the extent of their knowledge, in regard to each other. We have some reasons to suppose that *all* these means, of bringing man to the knowledge of the universe, will be employed. But, whatever the means employed, the thing will be done, and done effectually. Every veil will be torn off: every disguise will be stripped away—modest merit will come forth from its retirement—proud pretension will be reduced to its intrinsic value—the sheep's clothing will be torn from the back of the hypocrite, and he shall stand forth a wolf confessed. Every action of life will be seen in immediate connection with the motive by which it was prompted. Pride will no longer receive the honor due to zeal for the glory of God or to benevolence towards man. Bigotry and sectarian zeal will no longer be permitted to clothe themselves in the garb of piety and devotion to God. Man will be seen in his true character. Nor, let it be

supposed that the *great* events of life will *alone* be brought to light on this day. In the lives of most men, these are very few; and, in none, do they exert an equal influence, on the formation of character and the determination of destiny, with the unnoted tenor of every-day habits of feeling and action. Often, it happens that a thought indulged, a train of conversation pursued or a course of action persisted in, which attracts very little attention from observers or even from the individual himself, has much more to do in determining the course of future life, in giving color to character and fate, than the most striking events which befall us, or the most arduous enterprises we may achieve. These, then, will not be omitted, in the revelations of human life and character, at the bar of final retribution. And, it is not improbable that many will find, in that day, that their character and destiny have been mainly determined by idle day-dreams and purposeless speculations, which were regarded as of little or no importance when they were indulged in. Habits of thinking and currents of passion have been thus formed and strengthened, which have been operative upon the whole of after-life.

3. The third act, in the process of judgment, will be a comparing of the actions of men with the requirements of the dispensations, under which they have respectively lived; and, thereby, determining whether those actions have been good or evil. This comparison, now that the various dispensations of the Divine Government have been opened up and rendered clear to all, exhibiting, in all its extent and bearings, the rule of judgment arising under each, and now that the history of each man's life is exhibited in exact detail, will be a task of easy perform-

ance. It will be seen, at a glance, whether there has or has not been a conformity of life to the requirements of the dispensations, under which the parties adjudged have respectively lived. Take the Christian as an example, the rather because *we* live under the Christian dispensation, and shall, consequently, be judged by the rule arising under that dispensation. The requirements of *that* dispensation were that men should examine the Scriptures with searching carefulness, that they might know the things which belong to their peace:—that, convinced, by the truthful representations of those Scriptures, of the sinfulness of their hearts and lives, they should repent towards God, against whom they had sinned:—that, unable to offer any satisfaction for their sins that were past, and, seeing, in the atonement and mediation of Jesus Christ, a sufficiency of merit to render full satisfaction, and a readiness to appropriate that merit to that purpose, they should believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, with firm trust and confidence, for *present* pardon and acceptance with God:—that, being “justified by faith,” by a faith which “worketh by love, purifying the heart,” they should now “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ,” till they should attain to “the mark for the prize of their high calling, and be filled with all the fullness of God:”—that, being thus “created in Christ Jesus unto good works,” they should “glorify God, in their body and in their spirit which are God’s:”—that they should, to the utmost of their opportunity, “do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith;”—and, that, finally, they, “by patient continuance in well doing,” by being “faithful unto death,” by “enduring unto the end,” should “make their calling and election.

sure." These requirements, embracing a thousand subordinate details, will furnish the rule by which those who have lived under the Christian dispensation will be judged; and, with this rule the life's history of all such will be brought into comparison, and thus it will be seen who shall have been and who shall not have been conformed to the requirements, which, under that dispensation, were imposed upon them. Those who shall be found to have been thus conformed will meet the approval of the Judge; and those who shall not be so found, will meet His condemnation. Thus, too, with regard to those who have lived under other and inferior dispensations,—as they shall be found to have been conformed to the requirements of those dispensations, or refractory against them, they shall be approved or condemned, by the righteous Judge, in that day.

4. The fourth act of the judgment will be the separation of the good from the bad—the approved from the condemned. Two classes will divide between them the vast multitude of the human race—*the righteous* and *the wicked*. In each of these classes, there will be striking differences in the degree in which the predominating quality of the classes to which they respectively belong has prevailed; and, in proportion to the degree in which that quality has prevailed, will be the measure of the reward or punishment awarded to them. But, whatever the differences in degree of qualification, every child of Adam is prepared to occupy a place in one or other of these classes, and will be assigned to the class for which his qualification has prepared him.

In the class of the righteous will be found a large proportion of the human race, whose assignment to it will have no reference to what they have done; for, they never did or could do either moral good or evil. Their

place, in this class, is secured to them *solely* by what Christ did *for* them, and what the Spirit of all grace did *in* them, without any co-operation on their part. We speak, of course, of that part of the human family who died before they *could* choose between good and evil, *as such*, and, consequently, before they could be responsible for their actions. The whole of Adam's race were involved in a "judgment unto condemnation," by the original offense: but, through Christ, "the free gift, unto justification of life, came upon them;" and, in that state of justification of life, they continue, *of course*, until they take themselves out of it by *personal* transgression. Hence, the blessed Saviour, speaking of infants, says: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." All who die in this state, will, therefore, in the day of judgment, be found in the "congregation of the righteous."

The rest of mankind will be assigned to a place, in these classes, "according as their works shall have been, whether good or bad." No former position, of high or low, no previous associations, no matter how intimate and endeared, or how repugnant and hostile, will exercise any influence upon the question of such assignment. Husbands and wives, who have loved each other more than life, if of different moral qualifications, will be assigned to the classes to which their respective qualifications have fitted them. Parents and children, whose affections to each other, while on earth, were most fervent and most enduring, will, if they differed in regard to their conformity to the will of God, be ranged differently on this day, according to their several moral affinities. Ministers and their congregations will not always enter all together into the same class. Too often, probably, will the min-

ister be found to have been unfaithful to his "high calling," or to have "given place to the Devil," so, as that, "after preaching to others, he has become himself a castaway." In such cases, while the dishonored minister takes his position in the class of the wicked, those of his congregation who have "walked worthy of God," are numbered among the righteous. On the other hand, it will, doubtless, occur, in very many instances, that the faithful minister, while he enters the class of the righteous, will see many whom, while on earth, he instructed, warned, exhorted and entreated and over whom he often wept and prayed, taking up their position in the class of the wicked. The separations of this day, unless human sensibilities shall have undergone an almost inconceivable change, will occasion scenes of sorrow and anguish previously never even imagined by man. The heart now sickens at the thought of them, imperfectly as they can be conceived. Be the fact as it may with regard to the righteous, we know that sorrow and anguish will have place in the hearts of the wicked, from seeing themselves excluded from the bliss of heaven, to which others are admitted before their eyes. Our Saviour warns the wicked Jews of His day, that there should be "weeping and gnashing of teeth," when they should see Abraham, and Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and they themselves thrust out." And, if the admission of these remote, though admired objects of their affection and reverence into the kingdom of God, and their own exclusion from it, would excite such grief and agony of soul, what may we reasonably suppose would be the sorrow and anguish that must thrill their souls, when they should see the mother that bare and nourished them, the father

whom they reverenced, the children of their own bowels and dear to them as the life-drops that nourish the heart, the long and tenderly-loved wife or husband, led off to the society of the good and the happy, while they themselves must herd with the ungodly, in ignominy and woe?

The separation of the whole human race into two classes, involves an association, on the part of the wicked, scarcely less soul-harrowing than the separation to which we have alluded. Let it be remembered that all the wicked are congregated together. What incongruities, what revolting opposites, what discordant elements are here thrown together! The gay, the thoughtless flutterer in the sunshine of prosperity and fashion, while on earth, now stands, *vis-a-vis*, with the gloomy, malignant misanthrope, just reeking, perhaps, from a deed of midnight assassination! The delicate, sentimental votary of taste and refinement, *tete-a-tete*, with the low, vulgar debauchee, hardly yet aroused from the lethargy of habitual brutalization. The man, who gloried in his spotless integrity and stainless honor, now the equal associate with liars, cheats and pick-pockets! We may not dwell upon a theme so revolting; but, let those who deem it a point of honor and a measure necessary to the enjoyment of existence to be *select* in their associations, reflect that, in living "without God in the world," in neglecting conformity to the requirements of the Gospel, they are securing to the most worthless, the basest, the vilest of human beings the questionless right of *entre* to their society while eternity shall endure. Let them remember this, and satisfy themselves how ruinous the speculation which purchases the pleasures of sin at *such* a cost!

The classification of mankind, into *righteous* and *wicked*,

is followed by an assignment of their respective positions, in relation to the Judge, indicative of His estimation and of the sentences which are to be pronounced upon them respectively. The righteous are placed on His right hand—the position of honor. The wicked, as a mark of ignominy, occupy a place on His left. Doubtless, on the left are found also the Devil and his angels—the first-born of rebellion—the instigators of man to transgression—their future associates in misery. We cannot help supposing that, over this dishonored and doomed host, will be seen clouds of coming vengeance, gathering and darkening every moment. Probably, too, deep, grumbling thunders, and flashes of lurid lightning, ever and anon, breaking from the impending storm-cloud, foretoken the resistless fury of the tempest, so soon to burst upon them with overwhelming ruin. We may also suppose that, sheer down from their position, yawns and approaches the fiery gulf, where tempest-tossed waves, of liquid sulphur, boil, and dash, and surge, hideously roaring for their prey. The slippery precipice seems gliding from under their feet. Affrighted, horror-stricken, hopeless, they groan, out of the bitterness of their souls, All, *all* is *lost!* *forever lost!* Meantime, we imagine the righteous pavilioned in and canopied with light and glory. Above them shine the jeweled walls and magnificently beautiful habitations of the New Jerusalem; whose gates, of chastely beauteous pearl, invitingly open, exhibit to them the entrance to their future, glorious, eternal home—the “mansions, in their Father’s house,” prepared for them, by their munificently provident elder Brother and Redeemer, the Lord Jesus Christ; while a broad, luminous highway, of easy ascent to their now buoyant natures, lies stretched out

from those open gates to their honorable position near the throne of judgment. So, we suppose, are situated the two great divisions of the human race, when,

5. The Judge arises to perform the *final* act of the judgment, in passing upon each class of mankind its appropriate sentence. We may well suppose that silence, hushed and profound, as the stillness which precedes and portends the bursting of the tempest, will settle down upon the expectant and deeply interested multitudes which stand on the right and the left hand of the Judge. If sound there be, in those vast assemblies, it must be the throb of some righteous heart, too full of rapture, in so near a prospect of eternal glory, to repress its exultant heavings, or the sigh, heart-piercing anguish, which bursts resistless from the pent-up bosom of some despairing sinner, awaiting his fearful destiny, now upon the point of being realized. Unless thus disturbed, the silence will, doubtless, be unbroken by the rustle of any movement, or even by a strongly-drawn respiration. Every eye will be turned toward the awe-inspiring Majesty of the Judge Supreme—every ear will be strained to catch each thrilling accent that shall flow from His doom-dealing lips. All lean toward the judgment-seat, in a trance of intensely interested expectation. And, now, turning to those on His right hand, and addressing them, in a voice sweeter than that of angel-melodies, He says: “Come, ye blessed of my Father! inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world—well done, good and faithful servants!—enter ye into the joy of your Lord—I appoint unto you a kingdom; that, having overcome, ye may sit down with me, in my throne; even as I overcame and am set down, with my Father, in His throne:—for, ye

have been faithful in a few things—in a very little—ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations—I was hungry, and ye gave me meat—I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink—I was a stranger, and ye took me in, naked, and ye clothed me—I was sick, and ye visited me—I was in prison, and ye came unto me—inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye did it unto me.” No address could excel this, in various and substantial interest. Almost every sentence, phrase and even word is emphatically cheering, encouraging and elevating in its tendency—“Come!” This invitation is from Him, who is the fountain of the highest honor, the perennial source of purest and most lasting enjoyment,—the center, to which all that is excellent in moral nature is attracted with resistless influence. To come to, or to enter into association with Him, is, at once, the greatest felicity, the highest dignity and the surest guarantee of noble and agreeable associations:—“Ye blessed of my Father!” Approved of Him, whose wisdom cannot err, who accepteth no man’s person, but always judgeth righteously—not only approved by Him, but the objects of His benediction, and affianced in His inexhaustible resources for all blessing and all happiness. “Inherit the kingdom, prepared for you from the foundation of the world”—prepared for those who have “approved themselves unto God, by patient continuance in well-doing.” The burden of their obligation, for coming blessedness, is thus condescendingly and kindly lightened, by a recognition of their immemorial right in the happiness and dignity to which they are exalted. It is THEIR *inheritance*, long awaiting their majority to enter on possession. And, that inheritance is of regal dignity and of incalculable value.

lable value. It is a kingdom—an everlasting kingdom, which they shall share with their Sovereign Redeemer, reigning with Him forever and ever. They are to sit down with Him, in *His* throne—they are to enter into *His* joy. How laudatory, too, is this address: “Well done, good and faithful servants! Ye have continued with me in my temptations—ye fed me, when hungry: ye gave me drink, when I was thirsty: ye extended hospitality to me, when I was a stranger: ye clothed me, when I was naked: ye visited me, in affliction, and came to me, when I was a prisoner, under the world’s dread ban. In my friends, my followers, ye dealt thus kindly with me.” What praise could exceed that which is here bestowed upon the righteous, in the audience of an assembled universe? Praise, discriminating praise, for moral excellence recognized, and for devotion to the Saviour, acknowledged by Him. Praise, flowing from the lips of infallible truth, is honor indeed. How must the bosoms of the righteous swell with unutterable delight, when *thus* addressed by Infinite Excellence, in the presence of such an auditory!

But, ah, how changed the countenance, the tone, the language of the Judge, when, turning to the wicked, on His left-hand, He denounces against them the horrible doom, which their iniquities have achieved for them! How appalling His frown! How soul-piercing His tone of righteous indignation! How reprehensive and denunciatory His language! “Depart from me, ye cursed! into everlasting fire, prepared for the Devil and his angels; for, I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in—naked, and ye clothed me not: I was sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Foras-

much as ye did it not unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye did it not unto me." Every word, in this terrible sentence, is calculated to carry dismay and horror to the hearts of those against whom it is denounced. "Depart from me!" It is the blessed Jesus, who so loved these very sinners against their own souls as to die for them—who called them, with long-enduring patience, to come to Him and be saved from that destruction which now yawns to receive them—nay, who stood, with persevering condescension and kindness, knocking at their door, soliciting admission, that He might bless and save them. It is this Jesus who now sternly and indignantly drives them into exile from His presence and favor "Ye cursed!" Ye righteously condemned! Ye devoted rebels! Ye anathematized of God! Ah! 'twere dreadful to be forever banished from Christ, the spring of joy, the source of honor, the center of all that is morally good in the universe! But, how incalculably is the calamity enhanced by the exile being the object of Divine malediction! To lie under the curse of the All-good, the Almighty, the Eternal! "Into everlasting fire!" Fearful doom! Immortal, imperishable, the fiercest flame, the intensest heat may exert their utmost fury upon these victims of Divine Justice—may carry the most grinding torture along every nerve, but they can never induce insensibility, they can never consume the sufferer. Still capable of agony, and still the prisoners of the burning pit, eternity shall witness to their unmitigable anguish—shall hear, unceasingly, the cries and groans of their woe and of their despair. To add to the horror of this frightful doom, the human culprits are given distinctly to understand that, originally, no such fate was intended for

them—that they are intruders upon the miserable inheritance “prepared for the Devil and his angels”—for those *first* transgressors of the holy law of God. To the suggestions of these evil beings, in preference to the kindly voice of the blessed Saviour, these human transgressors turned a willing ear—*their* counsel they followed; and, now, they must follow *them* to *their* place of melancholy doom. The reasons assigned, for denouncing upon them this terrible sentence are, that they were wanting in benevolence to man, or in devotion to Christ. Alms may be given munificently, noble deeds of beneficence may be performed, without establishing any, the slightest, claim to a favorable award on the great day of retribution. On the other hand, great zeal, for the advancement of Christ to universal dominion in the earth, may fail of such an award; but, where devotion to Christ induces beneficence to man—where “faith works by love, purifying the heart,” and “creates the man in Christ Jesus unto good works,” there will be found valid claims to Divine approbation, which will not fail to be recognized, in the judgment of the great day. One, or both of these being found wanting in those on the left-hand of the Judge, they are sentenced to “everlasting destruction from His presence and from the glory of His power,” to dwell in miserable companionship with the Devil and his angels, in “everlasting burnings.”

Of the manner of judicial proceedings, and of the sentence which will be pronounced against the Devil and his angels, we have no distinct information—we only know that they are now “reserved in chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day;” and, that, consequently, they will be present, on that awful occasion, to

“receive their sentence, and begin their hell.” We have also reason to believe that their audit will be *after* the righteous shall have been approved by the Judge; for, St. Paul interrogatively affirms that the saints shall “judge angels”—fallen and rebellious angels, doubtless; and, it is not to be supposed that, until they themselves have been judged and approved, will such honor and responsibility be conferred upon them. It was not important that we should know more of this matter; and, to indulge in conjecture, on so grave a subject, where Infinite Wisdom has seen proper to withhold information, would be worse than idle. We know they will be judged righteously—that they must be condemned to everlasting perdition; and, we have reason to believe that their condemnation and assignment to punishment will close the judicial proceedings of this awful and eventful day.

But, though the condemnation of the Devil and his angels, and their assignment to punishment shall close the *judicial* proceedings of the day of judgment, they do not conclude the deeply interesting business of the day. It remains for the various awards of the Judge to be carried into execution. This, it would seem, is first effected in the case of the wicked; as, in the *programme* of this day’s proceedings, it is said: “These shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.” Whether force will be required, in the execution of the sentence upon the wicked, we are not distinctly informed; but, there are many intimations that it will be employed. In one place, the Judge is represented as commanding the ministers of justice, “Take ye the unprofitable servant, and bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”

And, in the explanation of the parable of the *Tares*, the Saviour informs His disciples that the “Son of man shall send forth His angels, and they shall gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and them that do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire.” If force shall be required, it will be at hand; for, awaiting the orders of the Judge, are the myriads of mighty angels, under the leading of their great captain, the archangel, Michael, for whom no enterprise, within the scope of Divine permission, can be supposed arduous. We think it probable that the sentence will be first executed upon the Devil and his angels. They were the *first* to rebel, they instigated man’s transgression, from the days of Eden, to the consummation of all things. It is, therefore, reasonable that they should be the *first* to feel the infliction of the infamy and woe of eternal banishment from God, and of incarceration in the bottomless pit. But, if they be the *first*, they are followed, in quick succession, by the rebellious of mankind. Thus is evil swept away into one dark province of the universe; and the dreadful pit closes its mouth upon it, that the better portions of creation may no more be offended by its presence. We suffer not our imagination to follow the deep plunge of these unblest, into the regions of eternal woe. We would not, if we could, reveal the horrid secrets of their gloomy, miserable prison-house. The heart would faint under its survey.

We turn, then, to the destiny of the righteous, at the right-hand of the Judge. From the judgment-seat, in conformity to the sentence of their Judge, they “go away into life eternal”—not into immortality of being and consciousness merely; but, into the eternal fruition of God—the true life of moral nature, involving the

purest and most exalted happiness of which that nature is susceptible. Preceded by their approving Judge—their Redeemer—their Saviour—their elder Brother, and accompanied by the myriads of heaven's first-born sons, they rise, buoyant with immortality, and attracted by strong affinity, to the capital of the universe—the dwelling-place of the Most High—the court of the Great Supreme; and, there, with the good of every species and of all worlds, they will experience a perfect exemption from all evil, and enjoy, to the full extent of their utmost capacity, the happiness for which their constitutions prepare and dispose them. Of this happiness, we shall attempt no other description, except that they “shall be with Jesus, and shall see Him as He is,” and that “God Himself shall be with them, and shall be their God.”

What remains is to speak of the *duration* of the fates awarded in the day of judgment. They will be *everlasting*—*ETERNAL*. Millions of ages, multiplied by each other, will bring no nearer a period of the woes of the damned, or of the joys of the blessed. Eternity still remains after the lapse of any cycle, the measure of their respective destinies. Dr. Young has strikingly represented this perpetuity of human doom, in the following highly poetical lines:—

“Eternity, the various sentence past,
Assigns the sever'd throng distinct abodes,
Sulphureous or ambrosial. What ensues?
The deed predominant! The deed of deeds!
Which makes a hell of hell, a heav'n of heav'n.
The *goddess*, with determin'd aspect, turns
Her adamantine keys, enormous size,
Through Destiny's inextricable wards,
Deep driving every bolt, on both their fates.
Then, from the crystal battlements of heav'n,
Down, down she hurls it, through the dark profound,
Ten thousand, thousand fathoms, there to rust,
And ne'er unlock her resolution more.”—*Night Thoughts*.

We shall now close this Discourse, and the *series* to which it belongs, by some brief *improvements* on the subjects which have been under our consideration. We have attempted to establish the claim of the Scriptures, constituting the Old and New Testaments, as being Revelations from God. If we have succeeded in this attempt, we feel warranted in demanding for these Scriptures a degree of attention, respect and deference, to which no other document extant can lay any just claim. Not only because they are a revelation from God—a reason sufficient in itself to justify the demand in question—are they entitled to this distinction, but, also, because the matters revealed in them are of the highest concernment to every human being. Several of these important revelations are intended to inform man in regard to the earliest events that have a bearing upon human welfare. Others teach the relations subsisting between man and God—his Creator and Sovereign—those which exist among men, and those between man and his *present* and *future* of existence. If such be the revelations of the Scriptures—if those revelations are from God, and, therefore, of unquestionable authority, how diligently should those Scriptures be studied! How profoundly should they be revered! How sacredly should their requirements be complied with! And, how great the folly, and the sin of neglecting them—much more of treating them with contempt! He that scorns or even slight the Bible, is as if he destroyed the records of his ancestors—consumed in the *flames* his title-deeds to all permanent possessions, extinguished the light of his dwelling, and closed against himself every avenue of escape from poverty, misery and death.

From these Scriptures, we have derived our subjects for discussion, in the foregoing series; and on them we have exclusively relied for the means of understanding and representing those subjects in a proper manner. Other sources have been resorted to only as helps to our minds in understanding the teachings of those Scriptures. Our purpose has been to select subjects, not only intrinsically important, but bearing such a relation to one another as that they should constitute, together, a system of fundamental biblical instruction.

The Being, Nature and Character of God, and the relation that man sustains to Him, are subjects of commanding interest with every considerate, reasonable being, whose moral nature is capable of religious influence. And, well they may be so! No subject is of so much intrinsic importance as that which includes a Deity related to the inquirer. But, we should never be satisfied with merely philosophical speculations in regard to the Deity, no matter how grand or how interesting those speculations. We should aim at making all our investigations, into what regards the Divine Being, decisively practical in their character and tendency. He has placed Himself before man, and invited from him an attentive consideration of Himself, that the virtue of man may be promoted, and his happiness secured. And, for this purpose, no other moral influence can be equally effectual. His character is the sum of moral excellence, and His will is the law of holiness. His sovereignty and power are the efficient guarantees of the claims of righteousness upon moral agents—how, then, can we know God, without being morally the better for our science? How important,

therefore, that we should, above all things, seek to understand and know God!

Creation imposes on the *creature* an obligation of service to the Creator, to the full extent of the capability bestowed in that creation; unless, indeed, there were a malignant purpose in that creation. In such a case, if such a case could exist, no such obligation would accrue; because the existence bestowed would not be a benefit, and only benefits confer obligations. In the creation of the heavens and of the earth, of their inhabitants and of man, especially, *benevolence* was clearly the leading motive. Wisdom and power, it is true, are strikingly manifest in these wonderful exhibitions of the Eternal Godhead: but, wisdom and power are manifestly exerted to subserve the purposes of benevolence. Hence, when the great work of creation was completed, the Mighty Performer pronounced the worlds He had made "*very good*." The creation of man, in particular, exhibited the benevolence of his Creator in a strong light; for, man was endowed with ample capacities for *enjoyment*, animal, intellectual and moral—with a nature capable of indefinite improvement and development, and with an immortality of being, which laid out before him an endless career of improvement and happiness. Such being the case, how imperative the obligation on man to consecrate his whole capability to the service of his Creator! This obligation not only engrossed his whole capability, but must have run parallel with the whole course of his being, in all the circumstances in which his employment of moral agency might place him, even though, in those circumstances, the loss of moral power were included. If, by the abuse of moral agency,

moral power should be wholly destroyed, the obligation would so remain as that the party, so disqualified, if not responsible for the actions resulting from such disqualification, would be the subject of perpetual punishment, and justly, too, for the loss of moral power itself. How important, beyond comparison, must we, therefore, regard a strict compliance with the obligation of entire devotion to God!

This obligation, though so binding and so important, could be disregarded and violated by man; for, man was a moral agent—empowered, as such, to choose between good and evil. To guard man, in his primeval innocence and simplicity, against abusing his moral power, God informed him of his ability to do it, admonished him against such abuse and warned him of the fearful consequences he should thereby incur. Strange! that a being, holy, upright and happy—so taught and so warned—should have done what was so contrary to his holy nature, and what he knew must work a forfeiture of his happiness, and incur all the unknown evils involved in death—the terrible penalty denounced against transgression. Whether man would, untempted from without, have violated his sacred obligation to his Creator, we know not, and can never know. But, we do know that, under the seductive promptings of that malignant spirit, who “kept not his first estate,” as a pure angelic inhabitant of heaven, but, for his rebellion was cast out from God and happiness, man did violate that obligation; was thrust out from happiness, involved in guilt, corrupted in moral nature, and doomed to death—physical and eternal death. And, still, that infernal tempter plots and rages against man! Still

is he the enemy of God and man, and the destroyer of all who hearken to his wiles and yield to his influence! Surely, then, it behoves all men to understand his history and his devices, that they may avoid his snares, and resist his allurements to sin.

Man, in violation of his most sacred obligation, disobeyed God—was guilty, depraved and condemned to ruin. God, nevertheless, still loved him—“so loved him, that He gave His Only-begotten Son,” to be his Redeemer, by dying for him! How can man render a proper return for such love? Every individual of the human race should say: “What shall I render unto the Lord, for all His benefits”—redeeming love especially—“towards me? I will take the cup of salvation, and will call upon the name of the Lord.” To induce a disposition of this kind, and to enable man to carry into effect the purpose here avowed, the Holy Ghost and needed grace are given, at the intercession of the risen and ascended Redeemer. What folly, what madness to “grieve that Spirit,” to slight that grace! Nay, how promptly should we yield to the impulse of that Spirit! How diligently should we use that grace, so benevolently supplied! Our present and eternal welfare depends essentially upon our being “led by the Spirit,” and upon our “growing in grace.”

By these alone can we “come to repentance and to the acknowledgment” or “belief of the truth”—to “repentance towards God, not to be repented of,” and to belief of Gospel-truth—“faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.” Without this repentance, the sinner must “perish.” By this faith alone can he be justified, purified, rendered victorious over “the Devil, the world and the flesh.” By the

influence of this faith only can he ever be saved, and come into possession of the “inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away”—“eternal in the heavens.”

To urge us, the more effectually, to lay hold on eternal life, by repentance towards God and through faith in Christ Jesus, and to acquit ourselves, with diligent fidelity, of the high and sacred obligation of universal devotion to God, we are assured that we shall, each for himself, “give an account of himself to God,” and be “judged by Him according to our works,” for which purpose, “He has appointed a day.” If, then, “that awful day will surely come”—if we must “all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ”—if, there, “the secrets of all hearts shall be made manifest,” and every man receive “according to that he hath done, whether it be good, or whether it be evil,” how should we improve every moment of our time, how should we task all our faculties, how should we press into our service all the grace and all the means within our reach, that we may “make our calling and election sure!”—that we may “lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come!” How aggravated and unutterable the ruin we shall achieve for ourselves, if we “neglect the great salvation,” offered us in the Gospel! How bitter the self-reproach, with which we must eternally regard ourselves, if, “for the pleasures of sin, for a season” only, we cut ourselves off from “the recompense of the reward,” which glitters at the end of “the race set before us!” We are conjured by the deep and unutterable gloom of the “horrible pit,” to which sin certainly conducts her votaries; by

the joys "which are at God's right hand forevermore," to which we are urged by the invitations of the Gospel; by the importunate solicitations of the Holy Spirit, and by the agonies of dying Love on Calvary, to close with the overtures of salvation, and to "walk worthy of God to all pleasing, that we may lay hold on eternal life." Oh, let us hearken to these united pleadings with us to secure our eternal well-being! And, may the "riches of grace, in Christ Jesus," prevail for our eternal salvation! Amen!

